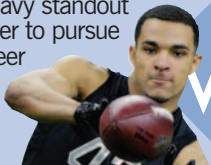


NFL

Former Navy standout Perry eager to pursue a pro career

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EUROPE
& PACIFIC
WEEKEND
EDITION

VIDEO GAMES

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MILITARY

DOD: Increase in reports of sexual assault, harassment

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Rates of sexual assault and harassment reports in the military have increased since last year, according to a Pentagon report released Thursday.

The Defense Department's fiscal year 2019 report on sexual assault in the military said there were 7,825 sexual assault reports involving service members as victims or subjects, a 3% increase compared to 2018. The increase in reports can't be characterized as an increase in assaults, according to the Pentagon, because a separate survey on prevalence is only conducted every other year.

The military received 1,021 formal sexual harassment complaints, a 10% increase from 2018.

This year's report focused on four areas related to the "strengths and challenges" that the military services have in their sexual assault response and prevention programs, including "unit climate."

Most military sexual assaults happen between service members who work or live nearby, and "when unit climates are tolerant of other forms of misconduct, risk of sexual assault increases," the report states. For active duty women, those who experience sexual harassment had a three times greater risk of sexual assault than those who did not, according to the report.

The year's report reflects feedback from 61 focus groups at eight installations in the United States with over 490 service members and first responders who work with survivors.

On unit climate, focus group participants said that service members find it hard to fully define sexual harassment and that male and female service members define it differently.

[SEE INCREASE ON PAGE 8](#)

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK



TONY DEJAK/AP

A man walks past a closed business Wednesday in Shaker Heights, Ohio. The U.S. economy shrank at a 4.8% annual rate last quarter as the coronavirus pandemic shut down much of the country and began triggering a recession that will end the longest expansion on record.

RELATED STORIES

Marine Corps basic training base hit by dozens of cases

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USNS Comfort leaving NYC after seeing little action

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Get the latest on the virus outbreak

[stripes.com/coronavirus](#)

Deepening downturn

30 million have sought US jobless aid since virus hit

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More than 3.8 million laid-off workers applied for unemployment benefits last week as the U.S. economy slid further into a crisis that is becoming the most devastating since the 1930s.

Roughly 30.3 million people have filed for jobless aid in the six weeks since the coronavirus outbreak began forcing millions of employers to close their doors and slash their workforces.

That is more people than live in the New York and Chicago metropolitan areas combined, and it's by far the worst string of layoffs on record. It adds up to more than one in six American workers.

With more employers cutting payrolls to save money, economists have forecast that the unemployment rate for April could go as high as 20%. That would be the highest rate since it reached 25% during the Great Depression.

[SEE DOWNTURN ON PAGE 10](#)

BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

| Country | Super E10 | Super unleaded | Super plus | Diesel | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------|-----------------|----|----|---|
| Germany | \$2.036 | \$2.489 | \$2.741 | \$2.700 | Azores | -- | -- | \$2.992 |
| Change in price | -3.9 cents | -4.0 cents | -4.1 cents | -4.3 cents | Change in price | -- | -- | No change |
| Netherlands | -- | \$3.039 | \$3.240 | \$3.371 | Belgium | -- | -- | Gas prices were not available at press time |
| Change in price | -- | -1.0 cents | -1.1 cents | -4.5 cents | Change in price | -- | -- | |
| U.K. | -- | \$2.399 | \$2.651 | \$2.630 | Turkey | -- | -- | \$2.542 |
| Change in price | -- | -4.9 cents | -4.1 cents | -4.3 cents | Change in price | -- | -- | -4.1 cents |

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

| Country | Unleaded | Super unleaded | Super plus | Diesel | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Japan | -- | \$2.529 | -- | \$2.489 | South Korea | \$1.859 | -- | \$2.559 |
| Change in price | -- | -4.0 cents | -- | -4.0 cents | Change in price | -4.0 cents | -- | -4.0 cents |
| Okinawa | \$1.829 | -- | -- | \$2.489 | Guam | \$1.839** | \$2.289 | \$2.539 |
| Change in price | -4.0 cents | -- | -- | -4.0 cents | Change in price | -4.0 cents | -5.0 cents | -4.0 cents |

* Diesel EFD ** Midgrade
For the week of May 1-7

EXCHANGE RATES

| Military rates | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Euro costs (May 1) | \$1.06 | Switzerland (Franc) |
| Dollar buys (May 1) | (0.8961) | Thailand (Baht) |
| British pound (May 1) | \$1.22 | Turkey (Lira) |
| Japanese yen (May 1) | 105.00 | (Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.) |
| South Korean won (May 1) | 1,188.00 | |
| Commercial rates | | |
| Bahrain (Dinar) | 0.3779 | |
| British pound | \$1.2505 | |
| Canada (Dollar) | 1.3893 | |
| China (Yuan) | 7.0616 | |
| Denmark (Krone) | 6.8688 | |
| Egypt (Pound) | 6.8955 | |
| Euro | \$1.0661/0.9207 | |
| Hong Kong (Dollar) | 7.7516 | |
| Hungary (Forint) | 235.20 | |
| Israel (Shekel) | 3.4964 | |
| Japan (Yen) | 105.56 | |
| Kuwait (Dinar) | 0.3093 | |
| Norway (Krone) | 10.2741 | |
| Philippines (Peso) | 50.48 | |
| Poland (Zloty) | 4.18 | |
| Saudi Arabia (Riyal) | 3.7575 | |
| Singapore (Dollar) | 1.4111 | |
| South Korea (Won) | 1,209.91 | |

INTEREST RATES

| | |
|---------------------------|------|
| Prime rate | 3.25 |
| Discount rate | 0.25 |
| Federal funds market rate | 0.05 |
| 3-month bill | 0.11 |
| 30-year bond | 1.24 |

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

TODAY IN STRIPES

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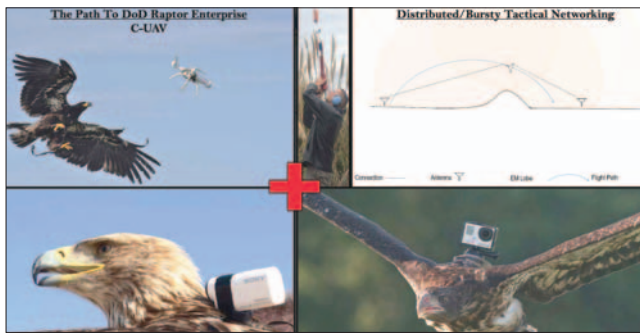
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MILITARY



JOSHUA FREEDMAN AND JUSTIN MURPHY/Naval Postgraduate School

This slide from an April 2018 conference presentation at the Naval Postgraduate School illustrates how researchers were inspired to look into using live relay nodes for mesh networks, by combining concepts from research into grenade-launched network devices and the use of trained falcons against drones.

Wi-Fido: Military researchers say dogs, birds could extend networks

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

Web-enabled birds and dogs could help unleash rapidly changing battlefield communications networks that would be hard for enemies to detect and jam, military researchers said.

The concept involves “networks with living nodes and links,” such as animals and people, alongside aerial and terrestrial drones, said Alex Bordetsky, director of the Naval Postgraduate School’s Center for Network Innovation and Experimentation.

The distributed mesh-like network would allow short bursts of communication before quickly disappearing.

“I named it ‘networks that don’t exist’ — meaning that they don’t exist for noticeable period(s) of time or within well-defined areas of space,” he said in a statement Monday. “They move quickly, from one place to another.”

Trained birds and dogs fitted with small devices offer advantages over drones because they’re less noticeable and can’t be sidelined by electronic countermeasures such as GPS jamming, the school said.

The research comes as the Defense Department prepares for potential adversaries capable of

“In modern warfare, you have nothing if you do not have network.”

Eugene Bourakov
Naval Postgraduate School’s
Center for Network Innovation and
Experimentation

detecting, locating and targeting operations via electronic signatures on the battlefield.

Russia, for example, has reportedly used electronic warfare and cyberattacks in the conflict in eastern Ukraine, sending targeted text messages meant to demoralize their adversaries or honing in on a formation’s electronic signals before firing an artillery barrage.

The idea for incorporating birds of prey as mobile relays to improve tactical networks combines two strains of research previously undertaken at NPS with a third phenomenon developing in civilian falconry, Marine Corps Maj. Joshua Freedman said in an April 2018 conference at the NPS campus in Monterey, Calif.

One of those concepts used a modified grenade launcher to

fire a device into the air, where it hung from a small parachute and relayed bursts of data to connect ground nodes.

Freedman and Maj. Justin Murphy took the concept of using falcons for a similar function from research into the use of trained birds to detect and take down small drones, and the trend of falconers strapping tiny video cameras to their birds, Freedman said. They also suggested dogs could be used for ground-based network hubs.

The Marines worked with Bordetsky and his colleague Eugene Bourakov, who NPS said have researched tactical mesh networks for most of the past two decades.

Their use on the battlefield could allow systems to link up without an internet connection that would be easily detected by an adversary.

In June, the team plans to launch a small satellite payload into low orbit to test the networking capabilities of fast-moving relay nodes in space.

“In modern warfare, you have nothing if you do not have network,” said Bourakov, chief engineer at NPS’s Center for Network Innovation and Experimentation.

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Air Force issues 150K gun locks in bid for safety

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force is giving away 150,000 gun locks at all stateside bases as part of efforts to reduce suicides and accidental deaths, the service said in a statement.

The cable locks will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis. Airmen should contact their base’s violence prevention officer for details about local distribution, officials said.

“Adding a cable lock to a firearm adds on average a couple minutes to a person’s ability to pull the trigger once they’ve accessed the weapon,” Brig. Gen. Claude Tudor, the Air Force Integrated Resilience director, said in the recent statement. “When that’s your child who doesn’t understand the danger or a person in distress trying to access that weapon to potentially do harm, those extra minutes are precious to prevent a tragedy.”

Personal firearms accounted for 66.5% of military suicides in 2018, a Pentagon report released Monday said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that ac-

cidental firearm discharges were responsible for the deaths of 458 people in 2018, 54 of whom were under the age of 14. That same year, there were 24,432 suicides by firearm in the United States, according to agency data.

Cable-style gun locks can be used for both pistols and shotguns. The cable is threaded through the weapon and blocks the barrel or the use of ammunition. It’s secured by a padlock and key. Basic cable locks retail for \$5 to \$10 online.

The Air Force initiative isn’t the first within the military community. The Department of Veterans Affairs began giving out locks in 2008, modeling a national gun safety program called Project ChildSafe.

Last year, the Veterans Crisis Line provided complimentary gun locks to the Peterson Air Force Base community in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Using a gun lock or other barrier may reduce suicide attempts, which tend to happen on impulse, mental health workers at Peterson said last year.

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FACEBOOK/Project ChildSafe

A pistol with a cable safety lock. The Air Force is distributing about 150,000 gun safety locks to bases in the U.S. as part of efforts to reduce suicides and accidental deaths, the service said.

Alaska gets four loaner F-35s from Utah to hasten standup of new wing

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

Four F-35A fighter jets based in Utah are in Alaska for two months to help Eielson Air Force Base stand up its fledgling squadron of fifth-generation fighters.

The four Lightning II multirole, stealth aircraft flew Monday to Alaska from Hill Air Force Base near Salt Lake City in about four hours, the Air Force said in a news release. A commercial flight between the two bases, about 2,000 miles, takes about six hours.

The loan of fighters from the 388th Fighter Wing at Hill to the 354th Fighter Wing at Eielson has been in the planning by the wings for quite some time, the Air Force said.

Eielson received its first two F-35s last week and is slated to get two to three each month until early 2022 when they will have 54 of the aircraft — enough for two squadrons, the Air Force said.

“From our experience here, we know that when you’re standing up a new program, every day is critical,” 388th Fighter Wing commander Col. Steven Behmer said

in the news release. “By loaning them these four airplanes, we hope it helps fast-forward their ability to train and bring more capability to the Air Force as a whole.”

The loan is helpful because in this early stage of F-35 operations in Alaska, there are more pilots than fighter jets, Col. David Skaliky, commander of the 354th Operations Group, said in the news release.

“We’ve been going [on temporary duty] to get the sorties and hours we need, but [the coronavirus] put an end to that,” he said. “So, the timing of this loan couldn’t be better.”

The extra four fighters also give maintenance crews needed hands-on training.

“In any new mission startup, you’ve got a high demand for training in ops, maintenance and mission support,” Col. Matthew Powell, 354th Maintenance Group commander, said in the news release. “These extra aircraft will help us get both the flying training and dedicated maintenance training for our newer crew chiefs, avionics and weapons technicians.”

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MILITARY

RIMPAC drills will go on in summer

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The world's largest international naval exercise will go ahead in waters off Hawaii this summer, but participating forces will stay at sea during the drills due to concerns about the coronavirus, the Navy announced Wednesday.

The Rim of the Pacific exercise will run from Aug. 27-31, according to a Navy statement on the U.S. Pacific Fleet website.

"This biennial maritime exercise will be an at-sea-only event in light of COVID-19 concerns," the statement said, referring to the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus.

Conducting the exercise only at sea is intended to ensure the safety of participating forces by minimizing shore-based contingents, according to the statement.

"Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet crafted the modified RIMPAC plan as a way to conduct a meaningful exercise with maximum training value and minimum risk to the force, allies and partners, and the people of Hawaii," the statement said.

This year's exercise will include multinational anti-submarine warfare, maritime intercept operations and live-fire training. Planners will remain flexible as Navy leaders monitor and assess evolving circumstances.

To limit the spread of the coronavirus there are no scheduled social events ashore, the statement said.

"Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam will be accessible for logistics support, with a minimal footprint of staff ashore for command and control, logistics and other support functions," the officials said in the statement.

The Navy did not announce participating nations.

In 2018, U.S. forces were joined

in the drills by friends and allies from Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, South Korea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand, Tonga, Vietnam and the United Kingdom.

The nations brought together a fleet of 46 warships and five submarines and troops from 18 national land forces, along with more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel.

China was invited to the exercise in 2014 and 2016, but it wasn't allowed to participate in 2018. It sent a spy ship to monitor the event that year.

"In these challenging times, it is more important than ever that our maritime forces work together to protect vital shipping lanes and ensure freedom of navigation through international waters," Adm. John Aquilino, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, said in the statement. "And we will operate safely, using prudent mitigation measures."

The exercise is designed to foster and sustain cooperative relationships, critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region, according to the Navy statement.

"We remain committed to and capable of safeguarding allies and partners throughout the Indo-Pacific region," Aquilino said. "The flexible approach to RIMPAC 2020 strikes the right balance between combating future adversaries and the COVID-19 threat."

RIMPAC 2020 will be led by U.S. 3rd Fleet commander Vice Adm. Scott Conn., according to the statement.

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Air Force commander relieved in South Korea

By MATTHEW KEELER
Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — The commander of an Air Force logistics readiness squadron in South Korea was relieved of command Tuesday, according to a statement from the 51st Fighter Wing.

Lt. Col. Michael Kearney lost his job leading the 51st Logistics Readiness Squadron "due to a loss of confidence" in his ability to effectively lead the squadron, the statement said. He was relieved by wing commander Col. John Gorkales.

Maj. Hans Hobbs, the readiness squadron director of opera-

tions, has assumed temporary command until travel restrictions are lifted and a new commander arrives.

The Pentagon has halted relocating service members and their families until at least June 30 as part of measures to curb the spread of coronavirus, but "we're exploring all options," 1st Lt. Daniel R. de La Fé, a wing spokesman, said in an email Wednesday.

Kearney has been reassigned to the 7th Air Force, located on Osan Air Base, where he will continue to serve under the logistics, engineering and force protection directorate.

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SAMUEL HARGROVE/U.S. Navy

The guided-missile destroyer USS Barry steams Tuesday near the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea.

Navy conducts back-to-back operations in South China Sea

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill steamed near the disputed Spratly Islands on Wednesday, marking the second time the U.S. has sent a warship on a freedom-of-navigation operation in the South China Sea this week, according to the Navy.

The mission challenged restrictions by China, Vietnam and Taiwan, which dispute sovereignty over the Spratly Islands, 7th Fleet spokeswoman Cmdr. Reann Mommensen said in a statement to Stars and Stripes on Thursday. The Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei also lay claim to portions of the islands.

"China, Vietnam, and Taiwan purport to require either permission or advance notification before a military vessel or warship engages in 'innocent passage' through the territorial sea," she said. "The unilateral imposition of any authorization or advance-notification requirement for innocent passage is not permitted by international law, so the United States challenged those requirements."

The day before, the guided-missile destroyer USS Barry conducted a similar operation through the Paracel Islands, another chain in the region over which China, Vietnam and Taiwan have overlapping claims.

The U.S. does not recognize any country's claim over either island chain.

"Unlawful and sweeping maritime claims in the South China Sea pose a serious threat to the freedom of the seas," Mommensen said in her statement. "The international community has an enduring role in preserving the freedom of the seas, which is critical to global security, stability,



ALLISON HEARNE/U.S. Navy

Lt. Richard Burk Vidmar stands watch on the bridge of the Barry.

and prosperity."

Li Huamin, spokesman for the Chinese southern theatre command, criticized the Barry's presence on the command's WeChat social media account, according to a Tuesday report by the South China Morning Post.

"These provocative acts by the US side ... have seriously violated China's sovereignty and security interests, deliberately increased regional security risks and could easily trigger an unexpected incident," Li said.

The Barry, based at Yokosuka, also transited the Taiwan Strait on April 24, a move that typically draws criticism from China, according to the Navy. The communist country views the 110-mile-wide strait as its territorial waters, but the U.S. considers it an international waterway.

The Bunker Hill, based at San Diego, and the Barry also recently completed exercises with the amphibious assault ship USS America and vessels from the Royal Australian Navy in the South China Sea, according to the Navy.

The operations took place as

the 7th Fleet prepares the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan and its strike group to leave for a patrol of the region.

The 7th Fleet is taking added steps to ensure the carrier group deploys without sailors infected by the coronavirus, which has sidelined the carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt in Guam for over a month.

However, the Barry, Bunker Hill and other vessels have been at sea several months, setting out before the pandemic struck Navy crews. Task Force 70 commander Rear Adm. George Wikofof said in an April 24 interview with Stars and Stripes. Task Force 70 is the battle arm of the 7th Fleet.

"They are out there on point right now on mission. Our Navy has not shut down out here," he said. "I continue to be impressed by the entire community here in the forward-deployed naval force and the work that they're doing to maintain that mission focus while we're working our way through the unknowns of this pandemic."

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MILITARY

Documents unsealed in 3M earplug suit

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Hundreds of pages of court documents were unsealed last week in a lawsuit against 3M regarding allegedly faulty earplugs it sold the military for use by service members in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

The documents, made public April 20 by a federal judge in Pensacola, Fla., include emails, depositions, memos and receipts related to the Defense Department's mass purchase of earplugs from the company between 2003 and 2015. They provide a glimpse into the case that now includes claims from more than 140,000 veterans.

"3M peddled these earplugs to the public and the United States military despite knowing they were dangerous and defective, perpetrating an ongoing fraud on our country and its citizens," the plaintiffs' lead counsel said in a statement. The lead counsel includes Bryan Aylstock of Aylstock Witkin Kreis & Overholtz PLLC; Shelley Hutson of Clark, Love & Hutson GP; and Christopher Seeger of Seeger Weiss LLP.

The "combat arms earplug, version 2" featured a dual-protection design. With the yellow end inserted into the ear, the wearer could still hear low-level sound, while inserting the olive-green end would offer the protection of a traditional earplug.

The lawsuit against 3M claims that the St. Paul, Minn.-based company knew from testing that the earplugs were too short to properly fit into an ear canal and could



CLS Strategies

More than 140,000 veterans have filed claims in a class-action lawsuit against 3M because of the dual-sided combat arms earplug, version 2, the company sold to the military from 2003 to 2015.

loosen in a way that was imperceptible to the wearer. It also claims that some of the testing results shown to the military before the purchase were done with a modification to the earplug that the military was not told was required to achieve optimal protection.

Instead, the military was given information to show that the modification was for people with very large ear canals, the lawsuit says.

Other testing results presented were conducted before the earplugs were shortened to fit into a carrying case, according

to court documents.

Many veterans who wore the earplugs suffer from hearing loss and tinnitus, or ringing in the ears, according to the lawsuit.

The new public documents show that the earplugs accounted for 5% of 3M's U.S. revenue and 20% of its operating income, in part because the earplugs cost 85 cents to make, but were sold for \$7.63. An internal email from 3M states that the company had "no data" on the current version of earplug being sold to the military.

In its defense in court records, 3M has said the earplugs were made to the government's specifications and that all test results, good and bad, were shared with the military.

In a statement regarding the unsealing of the court documents, 3M denied the product was defectively designed and caused injuries.

"We will vigorously defend ourselves against such allegations," according to the statement.

3M designed the earplugs "in close coordination" with the military, and the earplugs' design reflects the "direction and feedback of individuals acting on the military's behalf," according to the statement.

"3M has great respect for the brave men and women who protect us around the world, and their safety is our priority. We have a long history of partnering with the U.S. military, and we continue to make products to help protect our troops and

support their missions. We take very seriously our work with the U.S. government and continue to be committed to providing the best quality products at fair prices," according to the statement.

In July 2018, the Justice Department announced 3M agreed to pay \$9.1 million to resolve allegations that it knowingly sold the earplugs to the military without disclosing defects that hampered effectiveness. That lawsuit was filed through the whistleblower provision of the False Claims Act, according to a Justice Department release announcing the agreement.

Following that decision, a flurry of lawsuits were filed by veterans who wore the earplugs and now suffer from hearing loss. Those claims were combined into the mass tort case now churning through the legal system. In a mass tort case, each plaintiff is treated as an individual instead of as a group, such as in a class-action lawsuit.

The case is expected to get a trial date in 2021 before federal Judge M. Casey Rodgers in the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Florida.

"3M's 'government made me do it' defense fails on numerous grounds and should be denied by the court," lead counsel said in their statement. "We will continue to hold 3M accountable on behalf of the 140,000 servicemembers, veterans and civilians who suffer from hearing damage due to these defective earplugs."

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WAR ON TERRORISM

SEALs tried to find American taken by militants

By JAMES LAPORTA
AND ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In the days following the capture of an American contractor in Afghanistan earlier this year, Navy commandos raided a village and detained suspected members of a Taliban-linked militant network, The Associated Press has learned.

U.S. intelligence agents also tried to track the cellphones of the man and his captors, but the trail went cold, and there has been little public discussion by the U.S. government of Mark R. Frerichs' case, even as American negotiators arranged prisoner exchanges as part of their efforts to reach a peace deal with the Taliban.

Little is known about the circumstances surrounding the abduction of the contractor from Illinois.

The previously unreported attempts to rescue him were described to AP by multiple American officials over the past month, however, and shed new light on early efforts to locate Frerichs in the weeks that followed his capture. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the mission.

The new details emerge as violence and political infighting in Kabul threaten to scuttle the peace deal between the Taliban and the U.S.

In March, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo voiced frustrations after a failed attempt to mediate a power struggle between Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his political rival, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah.

Frerichs' father, Art, said in a statement that though he has faith in President Donald Trump and Pompeo, "I just need them to tell their people negotiating with the Taliban that America won't lift a finger until my son comes home. He's a veteran. This is America. We don't leave people behind."

Though no formal demands are known to have been made, U.S. intelligence officials believe that



Mark Frerichs, a contractor from Illinois, poses in Iraq in this undated photo obtained from Twitter that he would include with his resume when job hunting.

Frerichs was captured by members of the Haqqani network, a militant group that is aligned with the Taliban in Afghanistan and that was designated as a foreign terrorist organization in 2012.

Though the Haqqanis are known to carry out assassinations and kidnappings for ransom, Taliban leadership has not acknowledged Frerichs' capture.

"The first 96 hours is crucial," a senior U.S. government official briefed on the case told the AP on the condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

"If they're not recovered in the first few days, it becomes harder every minute after."

The search area for Frerichs began in Khost and extended south to the province of Kandahar, according to a senior U.S. government official and a second official at the Defense Department.

Bitter winter weather worked against the SEALs operation on the night of Feb. 3.

Periods of poor-to-nonexistent visibility ultimately delayed a

planned intelligence-gathering operation on a known Taliban location, the senior U.S. government official said.

At the time of Frerichs' capture in late January, the SEALs involved in the rescue effort had been working to recover the bodies of two American service members who died when their aircraft crash-landed in Ghazni in central Afghanistan, an operation that had also been complicated by the weather.

Once the weather cleared,

the SEALs loaded onto helicopters and flew to the undisclosed location.

The senior official declined to disclose the exact location of the province for operational security reasons.

The senior U.S. government official and the Defense Department source with knowledge of the raid, who also requested anonymity, said that the SEAL platoon was not met with Taliban resistance and that once at the compound, they detained several

alleged Haqqani militants and uncovered a weapons cache.

The suspected Haqqani members were questioned about Frerichs' whereabouts and were ultimately turned over to the Afghan government, according to the senior U.S. government official.

On Feb. 4, American intelligence officials received a report that Frerichs had possibly been moved to Quetta, Pakistan, a historical safe haven for the Taliban, the two officials said. But the information was deemed not credible enough to warrant a special operations mission, according to the senior U.S. government official.

The report also conflicted with signals intelligence — information gathered from electronic signals broadcast from devices like portable radios and cellphones — that U.S. officials had at the time.

U.S. intelligence officials continued to receive location pings from the suspected cellphones of Frerichs and his captors, but the trail went cold Feb. 5, according to the senior U.S. government and Defense Department officials.

"Operationally, the reason why time is critical in a kidnapping is because you can close the distance quicker, ideally immediately or by utilizing sources," said the senior U.S. government official. "This is not the case right now. He could be two houses down from where he was taken and we would not know."

2 contractors to compete for \$383M in rifle orders

Stars and Stripes

Colt and FN America will compete for each order of a \$383 million dollar contract to supply M16A4 assault rifles to Afghanistan, Grenada, Iraq, Lebanon and Nepal, the Pentagon said.

The fixed-price \$383 million contract for Foreign Military Sales will be handled by the U.S. Army Contracting Command, Detroit Arsenal, a statement said Tuesday. The contract's estimated completion date is April 28, 2025.

The contract could include up to 215,000 rifles, a September bid notice said.

Colt's Manufacturing Co., based in West Hartford, Conn., and FN America, a subsidiary of Belgium's Fabrique Nationale Herstal based in Columbia, S.C., were selected to compete for each order of the contract.

The M16A4, the fourth generation of the Vietnam-era M16 series, is equipped with a full-length Picatinny rail for mounting optics and other devices, a removable carrying handle and other upgrades. It is chambered for the 5.56 mm NATO round and has been offered to several U.S. allies in Asia, the Middle East and elsewhere.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Stuttgart cautioned as two-week streak of no cases ends

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A two-week stretch with no new confirmed coronavirus cases ended Wednesday for the Army's Stuttgart garrison, which earlier this month had reported more cases than any other U.S. military base in Europe.

The streak came after the garrison enacted rigorous restrictions, a statement ended with one positive test, though "the source of that individual's infection is not clear, nor is the scale of the spread," garrison commander Col. Jason Condney said during an online town hall meeting.

Five members of the community have been punished for vio-

“There are still too many that are not taking the right precautions.”

Col. Jason Condney
U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart commander

lating self-quarantine rules and other restrictions, Condney said. For the hard-hit Stuttgart military community, which had registered 103 confirmed infections as of April 8, the long run without a new positive test result was a turning point.

It's unclear exactly how many positive cases there are now in Stuttgart since the military in Europe no longer allows bases to report individual tallies because

of Pentagon restrictions. But the garrison, home to 28,000 Americans and the headquarters of U.S. European and Africa commands, had more confirmed cases than all the bases in South Korea and Japan combined before the public announcements stopped.

Garrison officials have cited extensive testing efforts and social distancing as factors in Stuttgart's turnaround.

One example frequently cited

by Army leadership in Stuttgart is a policy that allows people to visit the commissary, post exchange and mailroom twice a month. Community members are divided into three groups — red, white and blue — to limit excessive visits to public spaces.

Still, the concern now is that people are letting their guard down, Condney said.

"There are still too many that are not taking the right precautions, that are taking risks," Condney said. "It's not just a risk to themselves, it a risk to everyone they come in contact with."

To that end, three service members and two civilians have been punished for not following rules regarding self-isolation or other restrictions, Condney said,

without detailing the violations. The garrison restricted services to four of them and denied all installation access to one, he said.

Before Condney introduced his "red, white and blue" plan, Stuttgart was in crisis. The rapid pace of transmissions was putting access to critical services at risk, as more people got sick.

"From my perspective, the next call was going to shut us down," Condney said in early April.

On Wednesday, he cautioned community members to maintain vigilance to prevent another spike in cases.

Enforcing social distancing rules "has to be something the community owns," Condney said.

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Testing reveals several cases at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Nearly 50 recruits and staffers have tested positive for the coronavirus at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, the second outbreak to hit a Marines basic training base.

The cases at the Marines' West Coast training base are among recruits in one unit — Bravo Company — and some of the company's drill instructors and staff, according to Capt. Martin Harris, a spokesman for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

Last month, the Marines' East Coast basic training base at Parris Island, S.C., also had a few dozen cases among new recruits, causing them to temporarily stop new recruits from traveling to the base for training.

Harris on Wednesday would only confirm about four dozen people tested positive for the virus at the San Diego base. He would not give an exact number.

The recruits in Bravo Company arrived at the depot at the end of March just as more restrictions were established in response to the coronavirus, according to Harris. The company is one of nine recruit companies at the depot.

The recruits' movement was restricted for about a week after they arrived at the depot, staying near their living quarters and using one classroom to limit their exposure to the other training companies before their own official training started.

Commanders at both recruit depots are developing their own restriction of movement protocols for recruits based on their facilities and capacity, according to Gunnery Sgt. Justin Kronenberg, a spokesman for Marine Corps Recruiting Command.

The Citadel announced Monday that Marine recruits traveling to Parris Island will first report to the college campus for

two weeks of observation for the coronavirus before they go to the base. The Marines reached out to the college because their current staging operation with tents will not meet their needs once hurricane season starts in June, according to a Citadel statement.

In San Diego, the first case was identified in one of Bravo Company's six platoons in early April after training had started. When more cases in the unit were identified, the entire company was put into a 14-day quarantine.

When the quarantine concluded last week, the recruits in the platoon with the first case were all tested for the coronavirus because the depot had "an increased capability of testing," Harris said. The testing found almost 50 positive results among asymptomatic recruits, he said.

Brig. Gen. Ryan Heritage, the commanding general for the recruit depot, decided all of Bravo Company had to be tested "to make sure every one of them is healthy before they go back and to start training," Harris said.

More cases are expected to be found in Bravo Company as the testing continues, he said. No one testing positive has been hospitalized.

The depot will next test two other companies now in quarantine — Echo and India — who are waiting for their training to begin. They will test all future recruits when they come to the depot, according to Harris.

"It seems like that will be the new norm," he said.

Adm. Robert Burke, vice chief of naval operations, wrote in a service message April 20 that quarantining or isolating Navy personnel for 21 days will give them a 99% chance of being of the virus by the end of the period, compared to 95% at 14 days.

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MILITARY

Hospital ship leaving NYC for home

Associated Press

NEW YORK — After arriving to great fanfare, the USNS Comfort treated just 182 people as a surge in cases in hard-hit New York City fell short of the worst-case projections. The last dozen patients on the hospital ship were discharged or transferred to other hospitals over the weekend.

Eleven people that were treated on the ship died from coronavirus, the Defense Department said. Several ship personnel came down with coronavirus while deployed to New York.

A Pentagon spokesman called the ship's departure "a sure sign of modest progress in mitigating the virus in the nation's hardest hit city and is a welcome sign."

Gov. Andrew Cuomo said last week that he and President Donald Trump agreed the Comfort was no longer needed in New York City.

"I believe Comfort not only brought comfort but also saved lives," Cuomo said.

The Comfort and its 620 doctors, nurses and other crew members will return to the homeport in Norfolk, Va., where the ship will be restocked and be readied for another possible assignment. It's due to depart New York around noon Thursday.

Trump said he asked Cuomo if "we will return to the homeport to its base in Virginia so that we could have it in other locations."

The president sent the Comfort to his home state last month as projections showed it would need to double hospital capacity to 110,000 beds by the end of April. Disease-related hospitalizations peaked far below that — at 18,825 on April 12 — and have ticked down considerably since then. The number of new hospital admissions is holding at around 950



SETH WENIG/AP

The USNS Comfort passes lower Manhattan on its way to docking in New York on March 30. Uncertainty in planning for the coronavirus pandemic has left the globe dotted with barely used or unused temporary field hospitals. The Navy hospital ship that offered help in New York is soon to depart.

people a day.

More than 18,000 people in the state have died from coronavirus, most of them in New York City. That total doesn't include more than 5,300 deaths in the city that were attributed to the virus on death certificates but weren't confirmed by a lab test.

The Defense Department said it did not have information on how much the Comfort's mission to New York cost.

The Comfort has a capacity of up to 1,000 hospital beds, but according to New York City's Office of Emergency Management, it

had 427 set up for the coronavirus crisis — and all of those weren't needed.

Originally deployed to care for patients without coronavirus, the Comfort switched gears days after arriving to a Manhattan pier March 30 and started accepting them as the city's hospitals became overrun with people suffering from the disease.

That came after hospital administrators, relaying concerns of doctors and other emergency room staff, practically begged the government to open the hospital.

"I understand the intention

maybe of being helpful, but if you open up these facilities and you create all these beds, and then you decide that you don't want to take sick patients, it's a pretty useless proposition," Michael Dowling, president and CEO of hospital operator Northwell Health, said in an interview in early April.

"This is the Department of Defense. We are in a war today with a virus. I assume that they're used to dealing in wartime battlefields. This is a wartime battlefield right now," Dowling added.

Some troops to resume training in Hawaii

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

PORT SHAFER, Hawaii — Soldiers with the 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii will begin individual and small-group arms and skills training after a monthlong hiatus of social distancing due to the coronavirus threat.

"We have a requirement to maintain readiness, and so over the next few days you will see a small change here on Schofield Barracks as we begin to allow a small number of our soldiers to start training again," Maj. Gen. James Jarrard, the division's commander, said in a video-streamed virus update Monday. Training will be limited to the individual or squad levels, he said.

Hawaii Gov. David Ige issued a stay-at-home order on March 25 that closed all but essential businesses and banned gatherings in public places. Military officials in Hawaii have abided by the order, and the Army curtailed field training by soldiers, although aviation training continued in a manner that allowed social distancing by those involved.

On Saturday, Ige announced that the stay-at-home order was being extended until at least May 31 "out of an abundance of caution."

The state had 609 coronavirus cases and 16 deaths as of Tuesday, according to the Hawaii Department of Health. The pace of new infections, however, has slowed.

Faced with at least another month of reduced training, Jarrard said the division had to take some steps to maintain readiness.

"We have a requirement to be ready — all of our soldiers — in case our nation calls on us," he said. "Over time, some of these skills atrophy. They have over the last month or so. That is why we need to start our training program back so that we can make sure that our soldiers are proficient at their individual skills."

The training will begin with soldiers shooting their individual weapons on qualification ranges, he said.

"They'll be doing it at a small level, squad-size level, so that we can maintain social distancing protocols just like we have up until now," Jarrard said.

"But soldiers will also be doing training on their individual skill sets in their particular area of expertise or common skills ... all the things that are required for us to be ready."

Over the course of Monday and Tuesday, roughly 1,100 soldiers completed their required 14 days of restricted movement after returning from the Cobra Gold and Hanuman Guardian exercises in Thailand, the Army said.

None of those returning soldiers had displayed symptoms of COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, an outcome Jarrard hailed as "a good sign."

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Reports: 239 submissions to Catch a Serial Offender effort

FROM FRONT PAGE

Participants said that when it occurs, it is not always confronted or addressed, and service members believed that was because people don't want to jeopardize the career of a high-ranking or better performing service member.

Overall military culture is slowly heading in the right direction and senior leaders are actively making changes, according to the report. The focus groups said that generational difference in areas such as gender roles and inclusive attitudes could delay healthier workplace climates, ac-

cording to the report.

The military is working to provide more training and tools to those at the junior leadership ranks of E-4 to E-6 to address sexual assault and harassment because personnel in these ranks work closer with younger enlisted service members, according to Nate Galbreath, the acting director of the DOD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. Last year's reporting found that the increase in sexual assault were mostly among female service members between 17 to 24 and junior enlisted women.

Former acting Defense Secre-

tary Pat Shanahan issued a memo after last year's DOD report and recommendations from the Sexual Assault Accountability and Investigation Task Force Report, laying out actions to address sexual assault and harassment. This year's report includes some of the progress that has been made.

One of the actions listed by Shanahan was to make sexual harassment a separate military crime. The 2020 National Defense Authorization Act required the Defense Department to submit recommendations by June on establishing a separate punitive article for sexual harassment.

Another action was to establish the Catch a Serial Offender program, which allows survivors who make a restricted report to anonymously submit information to help identify repeat sexual offenders. The program allows the survivors another avenue to consider changing restricted reports to unrestricted and begin participating in the military justice system.

Since the program launched in August, there have been 239 reports submitted and five matches.

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Workers uncover 3rd unexploded bomb at Okinawa site

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A third unexploded bomb likely dropped by U.S. forces during World War II has been uncovered at Naha Airport, prompting a

second round of runway closures, Japanese officials said this week.

The 550-pound explosive, like the two discovered previously, measured 4 feet long by about a foot in diameter, a spokesman

from Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism office in Naha said Thursday. It was discovered by construction crews Wednesday.

The bomb was unearthed less

than 30 feet from the previous two, a Naha city spokesman said.

Officials have not yet settled on a date to defuse the most recently discovered bomb, a Naha city spokesman said.

MILITARY

New law protects benefits threatened by virus restrictions

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A new law aims to minimize the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on student veterans whose classes were disrupted.

President Donald Trump signed the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 late Tuesday after it received broad support in the House and Senate. The bill will restore GI Bill benefits to veterans whose campuses closed or who were forced to withdraw from classes.

The legislation also requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue payments to students in work-study programs who are unable to go to their jobs because of the virus.

"As the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic forces more schools and programs to shut their doors, we've got to ensure that our student veterans don't fall behind," Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., said in

a statement.

The legislation builds on another emergency fix — approved in mid-March — that allowed student veterans to receive their full monthly housing allowances, even as colleges went online-only in response to the pandemic. Typically, those payments are lower for veterans who do online coursework, rather than attending physical campuses.

Congress has tried to respond to the needs of student veterans as college campuses across the country closed to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Student Veterans of America, which has chapters at colleges nationwide, conducted a survey near the end of March which showed that most student veterans were concerned about the virus negatively affecting their educational goals.

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CHARLES ONU/U.S. Navy

Unexploded ordnance lies on Lanikai Beach, Oahu, Hawaii, after being recovered Monday by sailors from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Navy detonates WWII bombs off Hawaii

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — A Navy team on Monday blew up two World War II-era ordnance found in shallow water just off a popular Oahu beach.

Sailors with an explosive ordnance disposal team used C-4 munitions to blow up the 100-pound barnacle-encrusted bombs, which appeared to have intact fuses, according to a news release by the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources.

The pair of bombs, a type that would have been deployed from aircraft, were under about 12 feet of water roughly 400 yards out

from Lanikai Beach on the windward side of Oahu. The blast blew water high into the air.

Hawaii's beaches have been largely deserted the past month, the result of a stay-at-home order issued by the governor in response to the coronavirus threat.

Using an inflatable raft, the Navy team recovered another eight encrusted metal cylinders believed to be some type of munitions left in the water either during World War II, which ran from 1941-45, or shortly after it ended.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources was involved in the disposal because it controls and manages public lands, water resources, ocean waters, navi-

gable streams, coastal areas and minerals in the state.

The sailors, with Mobile Diving Salvage Unit 1 Detachment from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, transported the eight unexploded ordnance to a secure location for destruction.

Chuck Anthony, a spokesman for the joint base who witnessed the detonation and retrieval, said that the unexploded ordnance moved were so encrusted after more than seven decades in the sea that the team was unable to positively identify what they were.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Europe death toll tops 130K, economy shrinks

Associated Press

NEW YORK — As the number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits climbed Thursday, bleak news also arrived in Europe, where over 130,000 people with the virus have died.

Figures from the 19 countries that use the euro showed that the European economy shrank a record 3.8% in the first quarter as lockdowns turned cities into ghost towns and plunged nations into recession. The drop was the biggest since eurozone statistics began in 1995.

France's economy shrank an eye-popping 5.8%, the biggest quarterly drop since 1949. In Spain, the contraction was 5.2%. Germany is projecting that its economy, the eurozone's biggest, will shrink 6.3% this year.

In Europe, big job-protection programs are temporarily keeping millions on payrolls, sparing them the record-severing flood of layoffs that is battering the U.S.

No continent is being spared. The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a 37% surge in coronavirus cases in the past week — to more than 36,000 confirmed infections and over 1,500 deaths.

In Latin America, Brazil's virtually uncontrolled surge of coronavirus cases is igniting fears the consequences for workers, travelers and tourists will spread COVID-19 to neighboring coun-



JOHAN NILSSON, TT NEWS AGENCY/AP

A worker spreads fertilizer on the grass at Stadsparken in Lund, Sweden, Thursday. In an attempt to deter residents from gathering to celebrate Walpurgis Night, authorities spread stinking chicken manure on the grounds of a city park to keep people away.

tries that are doing a far better job of controlling the virus.

The pain of coronavirus lockdowns has piled pressure on governments to ease them.

The World Health Organization said nearly half of the 44 coun-

tries in Europe that restricted people's movements have started easing them and 11 more will do so soon.

As economies splutter back to life and workers adapt to the strangeness of new barriers de-

signed to keep them apart, governments are watching infection rates, wary of a second wave.

An experimental drug that proved effective against the coronavirus in a government study raised hopes for faster progress

in battling the epidemic and restoring wrecked economies and livelihoods.

The U.S. government and others are working to make the antiviral medication remdesivir available to patients as quickly as possible. News of the medical advance lifted world markets.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the U.S. government's top infectious-diseases expert, told NBC's "Today" show Thursday that he spoke with the chief of the Food and Drug Administration and expects approval for the emergency use of remdesivir to happen "really quickly."

While a vaccine is perhaps a year or more away, experts say an effective treatment could have a profound effect on the outbreak.

The virus has killed more than 220,000 people worldwide, including 61,000 in the U.S., according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Confirmed infections globally topped 3.2 million, including 1 million in the U.S., but the true numbers are believed to be much higher because of limited testing, differences in counting the dead and concealment by some governments.

Pushing to reopen the country, President Donald Trump was allowing federal social distancing guidelines to expire Thursday and was even planning to travel to Arizona next week.

Downturn: Nearly 70% of Americans who applied for assistance have been approved

FROM FRONT PAGE

This week, the government estimated that the economy shrank at a 4.8% annual rate in the first three months of this year, the sharpest quarterly drop since the 2008 financial crisis. Yet the picture is likely to grow far worse: The economy is expected to contract in the April-June quarter by as much as 40% at an annual rate. No previous quarter has been anywhere near as weak since the government began keeping such records after World War II.

As businesses across the country have shut down and laid off tens of millions of workers, the economy has sunk into a near-paralysis in just a few weeks. Factories, hotels, restaurants, department stores, movie theaters and many small businesses are shuttered. Home sales are falling. Households are slashing spending. Consumer confidence is sinking.

With some signs that the viral outbreak may have plateaued at least in certain areas of the country, a few governors have taken tentative steps to begin reopening their economies. But surveys show that a large majority of Americans remain wary of returning to shopping, traveling

and other normal economic activity. That suggests that many industries will struggle with diminished revenue for weeks or months to come and might be unable to rehire laid-off workers.

The Economic Policy Institute has calculated that about 70% of people who have filed for unemployment benefits since the virus struck have been approved. Applications from the rest may still be pending, or they might have been turned down. Some applicants may not have earned enough money in their previous jobs to qualify for unemployment benefits.

Thursday's figures also showed that states have approved the benefit applications of nearly 18 million people. This figure is much lower than the total number of people who have sought unemployment aid since the virus struck, in part because it lags behind by one week. And not everyone who applies for benefits manages to receive them.

The viral outbreak "has made us accustomed and de-sensitized to previously unthinkable phenomena, but today marks a tough reality for our country and for American workers," said Andrew Stettner, senior fellow the Century Foundation.

Americans' confidence in the economy and in their future incomes has plunged, a sentiment that could slow the rebound once more states and cities allow businesses to open. Many consumers, whose spending drives the bulk of the economy, may be slow to begin shopping, traveling and eating out. Some will likely remain too fearful of contracting the virus. And local and state officials are likely to maintain limits on the number of people who can congregate in certain places at any one time.

Consumer confidence, as measured by the Conference Board, has plummeted to a six-year low, and its measure of how Americans regard the current economy fell by a record amount.

Nearly a fifth of Americans expect their incomes to fall in the next six months, the Conference Board found, the worst such reading in more than seven years. That reinforced the belief that Americans will remain cautious in the spending for months to come.

In the meantime, the jobless are struggling to get by and secure their unemployment benefits.

In Sunrise, Fla., Jessica Salm had just started working at a Chili's when the restaurant closed



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

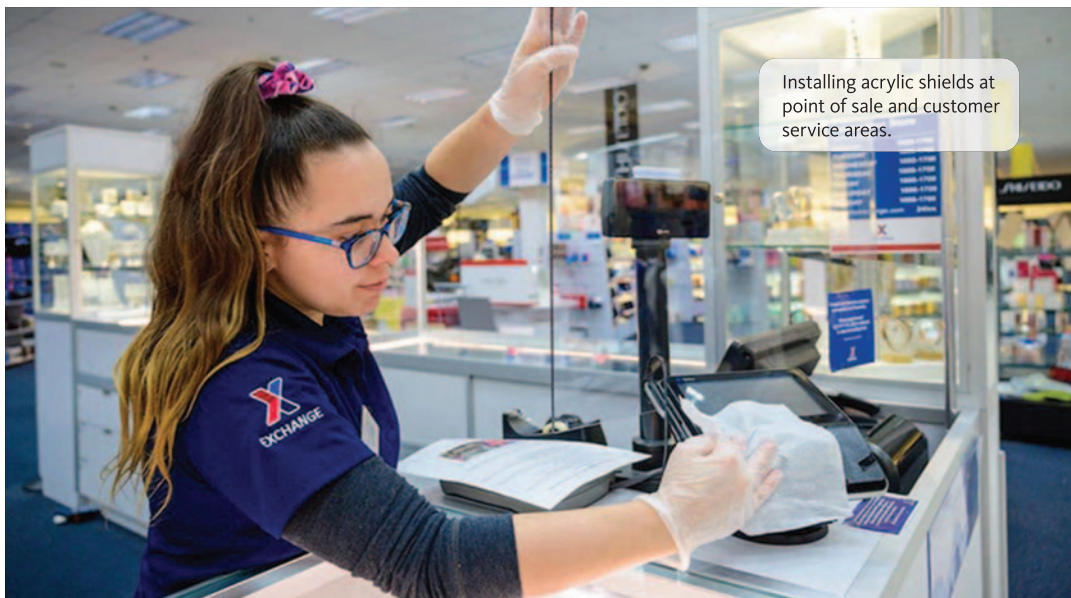
A woman loads a box of groceries into her cart as hundreds of people wait in line for food donations, given to those impacted by the COVID-19 virus outbreak, in Chelsea, Mass., on Tuesday.

March 16. It took her six days to file her claim through Florida's overloaded website. Her first unemployment check — \$494 for two weeks — didn't arrive until Friday, a month later. Before then, Salm relied on a \$225 payment from her union, which she used to pay her mortgage, car payment, car insurance, health insurance and the \$1,500 credit

card bill that she and her fiancé have built up. Salm hopes to return to work soon. But she fears for her health and isn't sure what kind of business the restaurant will do.

"I'm not sure how that's going to work with everyone still fearful," she said.

In the U.S. and overseas, layoffs are mounting, with the airline industry still shedding jobs. Boeing announced this week that it would cut 10% of its workforce through layoffs, buyouts and attrition. The company has been hammered by the collapse in air travel and troubles with its 737 MAX aircraft.



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VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Jobless surges pushing state funds toward insolvency

Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — A surge in unemployment statistics from the coronavirus shutdown of large parts of the U.S. economy is starting to push some state jobless funds toward insolvency.

At least six states have already notified the federal government that they could need to borrow billions of dollars to pay unemployment benefits because their own trust funds are running out of money.

While the shortfalls won't prevent unemployed workers from getting government aid, the federal loans could lead to higher taxes for businesses in future years to repay the debt.

U.S. Treasury data shows that California, Connecticut and Illinois all expect to borrow soon from the federal government to prop up their unemployment funds. Officials in Massachusetts, New York and Texas confirmed to The Associated Press that they have also notified the federal government of their anticipated need for loans.

California

SACRAMENTO — A memo sent to California police chiefs says that Gov. Gavin Newsom will order all beaches and state parks closed starting Friday to curb spread of the coronavirus.

The California Police Chiefs Association sent the bulletin to its members Wednesday evening. Eric Nunez, president of the association, said that it was sent to give chiefs time to plan ahead of Newsom's expected announcement Thursday.

Most state parks are already closed, and many communities have already shut their beaches. But some of those open in Ventura and Orange counties attracted large crowds last weekend, drawing Newsom's ire. He said Monday that the crowds were an example of "what not to do" if the state wants to continue its progress fighting the virus.

In Newport Beach, some 80,000 visitors hit the beach over the weekend, although lifeguards said that most people exercised social distancing. With criticism swirling, the Newport Beach City Council met Tuesday and rejected a proposal to close the beaches for the next three weekends.

Colorado

DENVER — Colorado's biggest prison has become the site of the state's largest coronavirus outbreak, with 252 people testing positive as of Wednesday at the Sterling Correctional Facility.

Data updated weekly by the state health department shows

that 241 inmates and 11 staff members have been confirmed to have COVID-19 at the prison with about 2,500 inmates on the state's northeastern plains.

Four of the inmates have been hospitalized, Colorado Department of Corrections spokeswoman Annie Skinner said.

The prison tested 472 inmates last week in order to isolate those who had the disease and minimize its spread.

North Dakota

BISMARCK — North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum said Wednesday that he'll allow movie theaters to reopen with precautions, but will keep other large-scale venues and K-12 schools closed until further notice.

Burgum said this week that he intends to lift restrictions on most businesses beginning Friday, saying that the state has made significant progress in its effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus. The plan to ease restrictions includes limiting bars and restaurants to half-capacity, requiring barbers and cosmetologists to wear face masks and prohibiting some high-intensity fitness classes.

Burgum added movie theaters to the list of businesses that may reopen if they limit seating to 20% of capacity, stagger start times and "allow for proper spacing."

But Burgum said that he was not ready to allow such things as sports arenas and large concert venues to open.

Nevada

LAS VEGAS — Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak is extending his directive asking people to stay at home to limit the spread of the coronavirus until May 15. But he will ease restrictions on other outdoor activities and some businesses starting Friday.

Sisolak's office said Wednesday night that he would allow retail businesses and marijuana dispensaries to offer curbside pickup starting May 1, as restaurants have been doing. He will also allow drive-in church and other religious services, as long as participants stay in their cars and maintain at least 6 feet of distance from those outside their household.

The updates Wednesday night came hours after the governor teased the announcements in an interview with ABC News.

Sisolak said in the interview that Nevada's cases and deaths from COVID-19 have reached a plateau, but he wants to see declines before lifting his directive that people stay home outside of essential trips. He said that



CRAIG RUTTLE/AP

Workers move bodies to a refrigerated truck from the Andrew T. Checkley Funeral Home in the Brooklyn borough of New York on Wednesday.

the opening of Las Vegas casinos likely won't happen until the third or fourth phase of his gradual reopening plan, but he has not released any more details or timeline.

Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — COVID-19 has killed hundreds more Pennsylvania nursing home residents than was previously known, state health officials reported Wednesday, underscoring the threat at long-term care facilities that have struggled for weeks to contain the coronavirus.

The Department of Health reported 479 new COVID-19 deaths: 339 at nursing and personal care homes — raising Pennsylvania's death toll to more than 2,100. Nursing homes now account for 65% of the total.

Nursing homes cite shortages of personal protective equipment and have said that they haven't been able to do enough diagnostic testing to quickly identify and isolate patients and staff who have the virus.

State health officials have consistently said that they don't have the capacity to test all nursing home residents, and that only those with COVID-19 symptoms should be tested.

South Carolina

COLUMBIA — Three of the most conservative members of the South Carolina House sent a letter Wednesday to the House speaker, asking him to call lawmakers back to the Statehouse and end the governor's emergency orders over the coronavirus.

The goal of the Republicans would be to let businesses reopen quicker than Gov. Henry McMaster's plan, which he said is based on the advice of health officials.

House Speaker Jay Lucas, also a Republican, refused to talk about the letter Wednesday through a spokeswoman. He has not set a date for the House to return.

The governor's Accelerate SC committee to handle reopen-

ing met again Wednesday, this time focusing on restaurants and hotels.

Virginia

RICHMOND — Virginians will soon be able to have elective surgeries and dental checkups again, as Gov. Ralph Northam announced that nonessential medical procedures could resume Friday. The governor said that pet owners could also resume taking their animals to the vet for nonemergencies.

The governor imposed a ban on nonemergency procedures last month in an effort to reserve capacity in the state's health care system for coronavirus patients and personal protective equipment, such as face masks, for providers treating those patients.

Northam said at a news conference Wednesday that the state has avoided a surge in hospitalized patients like in Italy and New York, and is in a much better spot in terms of having enough supplies and capacity than it was a few weeks ago.

Medical and dental officials cheered the decision. The state's hospitals have pushed Northam to allow them to reopen for elective procedures as they grappled with lost revenues. Hospitals across the state have announced layoffs, furloughs and other measures to cut costs because of the ban. The Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association estimated that about 15,000 nonurgent inpatient and outpatient medical procedures have been canceled each week during the ban.

Washington

SEATTLE — A hospital industry group said that patients in Washington are being hurt because they don't have access to elective medical procedures which are currently restricted due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The Washington State Hospital Association, saying that facilities have plenty of capacity amid a decline in COVID-19 patients, is

urging Gov. Jay Inslee to let elective procedures resume.

The group sent a letter to Inslee on April 10 asking him to ease the restrictions which were put in place over worries that COVID-19 patients would overwhelm the system. The Seattle Times reported that Cassie Sauer, the chief executive officer of the WSHA, said that the organization renewed its request in a Tuesday phone call with Inslee.

According to association surveys, the statewide average for hospital capacity is currently at 70%. Sauer said that she is concerned about the toll on patients from delayed cancer screenings and a wide range of other procedures, as well as the financial hit on hospitals from reduced revenues.

West Virginia

CHARLESTON — West Virginia churches, small businesses and restaurants with outdoor seating are set to reopen next week as the state reached a coronavirus testing benchmark that Gov. Jim Justice recently loosened.

Wednesday marked the third day in a row that the state's positive test rate stayed under 3%, allowing the state to enter week two of the Republican governor's plan to lift virus restrictions.

The governor's administration earlier this week said without explanation that it was shifting its reopening criteria. Instead of needing cases to decline for two consecutive weeks, a three-day drop would suffice. Clay Marsh, a West Virginia University official leading the state's virus response, had previously said that he wanted the two-week benchmark. A White House plan for states also endorses a two-week decline in cases.

Marsh said that the state has enough downward trend lines to start lifting restrictions, though he did not specifically address why the benchmark was eased when asked during a news conference.

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EXCHANGE

NATION

Trump erupts at advisers over poll numbers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump erupted at his top political advisers last week when they presented him with worrisome polling data that showed his support eroding in a series of battleground states as his response to the coronavirus comes under criticism.

As the virus takes its deadly toll and much of the nation's economy remains shuttered, new surveys by the Republican National Committee and Trump's campaign pointed to a harrowing picture for the president as he faces reelection.

While Trump saw some of the best approval ratings of his presidency during the early weeks of the crisis, aides highlighted

the growing political cost of the crisis and the unforced errors by Trump in his free-wheeling press briefings.

Trump reacted with defiance, incredulity that he could be losing to someone he viewed as a weak candidate.

"I am not f-ing losing to Joe Biden," he repeated in a series of heated conference calls with his top campaign officials, according to five people with knowledge of the conversations. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about private discussions.

The message to the president was sobering: Trump was replacing the former Democratic vice president in many key battleground states, he was told, and would

have lost the Electoral College if the election had been held in April.

On the line from the White House, Trump snapped at the state of his polling during a series of calls with campaign manager Brad Parscale, who called in from Florida; RNC chair Ronna McDaniel, on the line from her home in Michigan; senior adviser Jared Kushner; and other aides.

Echoing a number of White House aides and outside advisers, the political team urged Trump to curtail his daily coronavirus briefings, arguing that the combative sessions were costing him in the polls, particularly among seniors. Trump initially pushed back, pointing to high television ratings. But, at least temporarily, he agreed to scale back the briefings after drawing

sharp criticism for raising the idea that Americans might get virus protection by injecting disinfectants.

Trump aides encouraged the president to stay out of medical issues and direct his focus toward more familiar and politically important ground: the economy.

Even as Trump preaches optimism, the president has expressed frustration and even powerlessness as the dire economic statistics pile up. It's been a whiplash-inducing moment for the president, who just two months ago planned to run for reelection on the strength of an economy that was experiencing unprecedented employment levels. Now, as the records mount in the opposite direction, Trump is feeling the pressure.

Biden faces challenge over assault allegation

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A sexual assault allegation is raising Joe Biden's first big challenge as the Democrats' presidential nominee, fueling Republican attacks and leaving many in his own party in an uncomfortable bind.

Biden's campaign has denied the allegation from his former Senate staffer Tara Reade, who has said Biden assaulted her in the basement of a Capitol Hill office building in the 1990s. But the story garnered fresh attention this week after two of Reade's associates said she previously told them about elements of her allegations.

Republicans who are worried about President Donald Trump's increasingly precarious political standing are seizing on the allegation to portray Democrats as hypocrites who only defend women who allege wrongdoing against conservatives. They are digging in despite the fact that it could renew attention on the multiple sexual assault allegations lodged against Trump.

Democrats, meanwhile, are in an awkward position of vigorously validating women who come forward with their stories while defending the man who will be their standard-bearer in what many in the party consider the most important election of their lifetimes.

The tension is heightened because Biden himself is saying nothing about the allegation.

Like many Americans, he has spent the past several weeks at home to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. He hasn't held a press briefing since April 2, before multiple news organizations reported Reade's story. The public appearances he has made, such as fundraisers or events alongside prominent Democrats, have been controlled.

Some Democrats say that approach isn't working and are urging a more forceful response.

The campaign has issued statements, but he hasn't issued any statements in his own voice,"

said former Democratic National Committee Chairwoman Donna Brazile. "It's not helping, it's just damaging — not only to the person who has come forward, but it's also damaging the candidate."

Lis Smith, who worked as a top strategist on Pete Buttigieg's presidential campaign, also called on the Biden campaign to speak up.

"These accusations have not been found to be credible, so it's in the Biden campaign's interest to nip this in the bud directly and do it quickly," she said.

The November contest between Biden and Trump will be the first presidential race of the #MeToo era, which has led numerous women to come forward with allegations of sexual assault. Trump himself has been accused of assault and unwanted touching by numerous women, allegations he denies. He was forced to apologize during the 2016 campaign after he was heard on a recording bragging about using his fame to assault women.

Women are a core constituency for Democrats, and Biden has a mixed history. While he wrote the Violence Against Women Act as a senator, he also came under heavy criticism for his handling of Anita Hill's Senate testimony in the 1990s. Just before he launched his 2020 campaign, several women accused him of unwanted touching, behavior for which he apologized.

Biden has pledged to pick a woman as a running mate, and the allegation has left those thought to be in contention in a tight spot.

Stacey Abrams, the former Georgia Democratic governor candidate, said, "Women deserve to be heard, and I believe they need to be listened to, but I also believe that those allegations have to be investigated by credible sources."

"The New York Times did a deep investigation and they found that the accusation was not credible," she added. "I believe Joe Biden."



JOHN MINICILLA/AP

Wake-up call

NYPD officers wake up sleeping passengers and direct them to the exits at the 207th Street A-train station Thursday in the Manhattan borough of New York.

Trump tweets raise speculation about a potential Flynn pardon

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Thursday tweeted his support for his former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, raising speculation that a pardon may be coming as Flynn's lawyers released internal FBI documents to bolster their claim the FBI was trying to entrap him.

Trump has long said he is considering pardoning Flynn, who pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI in 2017. The president spent Wednesday night and Thursday morning retweeting supportive statements and a video Flynn tweeted of an American flag flapping in the wind.

"What happened to General Michael Flynn, a war hero, should

never be allowed to happen to a citizen of the United States again!" Trump wrote Thursday morning as his counselor, Kellyanne Conway, was on Fox News Channel responding to the case.

Conway said it would be up to Trump to make any announcement, but called Flynn's treatment a "disgrace."

Trump "has made very clear that he feels people around him are treated very unfairly, and in this case worse," she said.

Lawyers for Flynn released internal FBI emails and handwritten notes on Wednesday documenting internal correspondence among FBI officials before Flynn's interview with the bureau. They contend the documents bolster their allegations

that Flynn was set up to lie when he was questioned at the White House three years ago. The notes show the officials grappling with how best to approach Flynn, how much information to provide him during an interview and what to do if he made a false statement.

Flynn seeks to withdraw his guilty plea to lying to the FBI and makes broad assertions of law enforcement misconduct. U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan has rejected many of the defense arguments but has yet to rule on whether Flynn can take back his guilty plea.

Meanwhile, a federal prosecutor from Missouri is reviewing the Justice Department's handling of the case at the direction of Attorney General William Barr.

WEEKEND



More stories from
horror's royalty
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ANOTHER FALLOUT ROLLOUT

Wastelanders
update brings
more NPCs —
and more TP
— to gamers

Page 17



WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECH



Scott Urban's Reflectacles glasses reflect or block the infrared light of security cameras.

Stacey Wescott, Chicago Tribune/TNS

Keeping identity a secret

Reflectacles glasses thwart facial recognition software

By ALLY MAROTTI
Chicago Tribune

The chunky, thick-framed glasses Scott Urban makes in his Chicago workshop look like normal eyeglasses, but when viewed on a security camera, the wearer's face becomes a shining orb.

Reflectacles, as the glasses are called, are among a growing number of devices developed to protect individual privacy as facial recognition technology becomes cheaper, faster and more commonplace.

The technology is increasingly used by law enforcement and touted by tech companies, in part because advancements in security cameras allow them to record higher-quality images.

But privacy advocates say widespread use of facial recognition should be viewed with concern. The technology collects data to create a map of someone's face. Privacy advocates worry that mass use of facial recognition software, especially in public places, could erode personal privacy and be used to track people's movements.

"How are we going to protect ourselves, protect our privacy when we leave our front door?" said Dave Maass, senior investigative researcher at the San Francisco-based digital rights nonprofit Electronic Frontier Foundation. "How do we ensure that as all these technologies advance, our privacy and our personal movements are also protected?"

That's where entrepreneurs are stepping in. Designers, artists and researchers around the world have invented masks that block facial recognition technology. There are also glasses that use different tactics than Reflectacles, and even clothing with faces on the fabric meant to confuse the cameras.

For years, social media sites have used facial recognition technology in tagging features. Popular apps also have used it to find customers' likeness in works of art or other images. In 2017, Apple rolled out a feature on the iPhone X that uses facial recognition to unlock the screen.

But recent uses of the tech have raised concern among policymakers and the public.

A New York company called Clearview AI is selling facial recognition tools to law enforcement agencies around the country — including in Illinois — that allows them to tap into a database of photos scraped from social media. The Chicago Police Department uses Clearview's software to compare photographs of suspects against public information, according to department spokeswoman Maggie Huynh.

Sales of Amazon's Ring doorbell, which allows users to livestream video of the area outside their front door, are surging, creating webs of cameras

in neighborhoods.

The concerns surrounding such uses of facial recognition are multi-fold. Some worry the technology has imperfections, and its use could result in misidentification. For others, the main issue is lack of consent.

Illinois has one of the strictest laws in the nation protecting biometric data, which can include data from facial, fingerprint and iris scans. The 2008 law mandates that companies collecting such information obtain prior consent from consumers, detail how they'll use it and specify how long the information will be kept. The law also allows private citizens, rather than just governmental entities, to file lawsuits over the issue.

Tech giants and other companies have had to contend with the law. Earlier this year, Facebook ended a yearslong legal battle when it agreed to pay \$550 million to Illinois customers to settle allegations that its facial tagging feature violated their privacy rights.

Urban, the 38-year-old creator of Reflectacles, said wearing his glasses protects people from facial recognition technologies in public spaces.

"Everybody just doesn't like the erosion of privacy and there's no form of consent ... it's just being used on them," he said. "What I'm trying to do is give people the (option to) opt out."

Reflectacles products, which range from \$48 clip-on lenses to \$164 glasses, use different methods to block facial recognition. The base model has regular frames but the lenses themselves block infrared light, so the wearer's eyes don't appear on infrared security cameras.

Others have material in the rims that reflect visible and infrared light. To a security camera, the wearer's eyes become a glare.

Urban declined to comment on sales figures. He makes the glasses full time, and said the business is profitable. He launched Reflectacles via Kickstarter in late 2016, and started shipping them to backers the next year. In all, 311 backers pledged more than \$41,000 during that campaign.

Reflectacles do block facial recognition in certain situations, said Electronic Frontier Foundation's Maass, who owns two pairs of the glasses. He teaches at the University of Nevada, and uses the glasses as a demonstration in surveillance and cybersecurity lectures.

They block the facial recognition on iPhones, and obstruct infrared security cameras, he said. But they might not stop other types of facial recognition software.

Most customers know the protections Reflectacles and other privacy devices offer only go so far — especially when the device is wearable, and the user doesn't plan on wearing it 24/7.

GADGET WATCH

Smart garage door opener that doesn't require Wi-Fi

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Did you ever leave your home and wonder if you left with the garage open? I do, often. Even if you have a security camera, which can show if it's open or closed, shutting it is another story unless you have one of the newer Wi-Fi garage door openers.

An easy solution to control a non-Wi-Fi-enabled garage door is to add the Nexx NGX-200 smart garage controller, which connects to existing Wi-Fi.

Before you order, check the Nexx website for compatibility with your existing opener. You must know the manufacturer and model. If that information isn't available, they show you how to quickly test to determine if the opener is compatible with Nexx Garage, using a small wire, pliers or paper clip (my option).

If it's not compatible, don't worry; there is an adapter available (\$24.99) to make it work.

Once you have the controller, installation takes only a few minutes.

First, download the Nexx Home app (iOS and Android) and create a free account.

Follow the step-by-step instructions, which shows images of the parts to connect. The main power supply of the controller gets plugged into the AC power the garage controller is in and then connected with the included wire, to the same terminals on the garage controller, which you tested for the compatibility.

The power supply is kept in place with tape, Velcro or cables ties. Plugging in the wire to those two terminals, which takes a second, is the only wiring required and there's no hub or monthly subscriptions.

After it's powered up and the proper lights are glowing, use

the Nexx Home app to configure the setup to your Wi-Fi. One problem that a lot of people have with smart home devices is the Wi-Fi. The router has to be within range — closer is always better — and having it in the central part of your home is typically the best option.

The last installation step is the sensor pairing. After it's paired, the sensor is attached to your garage door with included Velcro to the top middle of the inside of the garage door. A photo showing you the location is in the setup guide.

And just as the instructions say, you are now good to go for opening or closing your garage door from anywhere by just tapping the garage door icon in the center of the app. The app allows sharing of the access, or just open the garage remotely upon request for family, friends or workers.

The app also has the option to set up a schedule to open or close the door, along with a timer. Push notifications can be set and sent to a smartphone for alerts when the garage door is opened or closed, and if you shared the access, you'll know who is using it. A history log also keeps track of the device history.

The Nexx NGX-200 works with voice assistants Amazon Alexa, Google Home, Siri and SmartThings.

Just Drive Geofencing technology will tell the garage door to open when you're in the driveway. Functionality for Geofencing is dependent on the user's phone system, Wi-Fi network and individual settings.

This is one of the best systems I've tested for garage door control for many reasons, including simple explanation and showing compatibility before you begin, instructions, installation process and the app, which is simple to navigate and has a user-friendly dashboard.

Online: getnexx.com; \$79.99



NEXX/TNS

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



Wastelanders takes place one year after Fallout 76 and breathes new life into the game with a new story quest and unique companions.

New signs of life

Wastelanders propels Fallout 76 with addition of NPCs, more activities

By BRIAN BOWERS
Stars and Stripes

With the advent of COVID-19, the postapocalyptic world of Fallout 76 seems much less alien. As I don a hazmat suit to wander the depopulated landscape of West Virginia to search for essential supplies and deal with unexpected creatures, I get a feeling of déjà vu. Only a day before, I was wearing a face mask while scouring the depopulated shopping centers of Northern Virginia for toilet paper and removing a snake from our front steps. The only differences: Fallout features more gunplay—and more available toilet paper.

When Bethesda Softworks released Fallout 76 about a year and a half ago, it featured a world where all the game's humans were the avatars of other players. There were robots, mutants and ghouls shriveled by radiation, but no "living" humans other than other players. Since interaction with nonplayer characters was one of the vital elements in previous Fallout games, Fallout 76 seemed somewhat hollow.

That changed in mid-April with the release of the massive update Fallout 76: Wastelanders. Bethesda dropped hundreds of new characters into the hills of West Virginia and breathed new life into the game.

Fallout 76 is set in the early 2100s, three decades after nuclear war has devastated America. As the game opens, you climb out of your protective vault to rebuild America—or at least Appalachia. You quickly discover that a plague has decimated West Virginia's survivors, killing most and turning the rest into zombie-like creatures known as the scorched. The only humans around are your fellow vault-dwellers—who are

controlled by other players.

Wastelanders is set about a year later. By that time, you have found an inoculation for the plague, which makes the area safe for new settlers. But resettlement is actually propelled by rumors of an immense treasure hidden beneath the Appalachian hills. As a result, the area is crawling with prospectors, farmers, merchants, raiders and weird cultists who worship Mothman.

Wastelanders offers two primary storylines. One appears to be aimed at new players. It's relatively brief and involves simple missions originating in a tavern near your home vault. It also

offers only a few hints about the mysterious treasure. The real search unfolds in the second storyline.

Among the area's new residents are two opposing groups that can be of assistance in finding the treasure. One is a hardy band of settlers who are building a town on a hill in the southern end of the game's sprawling map. The other is a rapacious gang of raiders who have commandeered a crashed space station far to the north.

For a while, you can work with both groups, performing missions and gaining status with each. However, you'll eventually need to choose a side. I joined the settlers, but I'm sure both tracks lead in the same general direction. My allies offered advice and assistance as I assembled a crew and gathered the equipment needed to accomplish the ultimate mission.

This storyline wasn't particularly long

Overall grade: **A-**

either, but it was fun and opened a new door to trade and upgrades.

Wastelanders also introduces nonplayer companions to Fallout 76. Traditionally, Fallout companions are at your side to deliver additional quests, provide extra firepower, carry extra gear and—perhaps—offer the chance at romance. Things are a bit different this time around. They simply hang around at your homestead and wave goodbye as you tackle the missions they assign. I was very disappointed when I finished the former astronaut's quests and she didn't lead to my side to face the mutants and marauders. I guess Bethesda figures that's the job of other Fallout players. Unfortunately, my previous Fallout 76 companions refused to join the action again.

As I returned to the Appalachian action, I noticed that the game has improved in many ways over the past year. There are more activities, better options for building your homestead, fewer visual glitches and greater stability for the servers.

The game is rated M for violence—except to see heads and arms laying around after a nasty firefight.

Wastelanders marks a major step forward for Fallout 76. However, it does more to whet the appetite than to satisfy it. I'm eager to see a more robust set of missions and characters—most like those offered in Bethesda's other online adventure, Elder Scrolls Online.

Bottom line: A-
Platforms: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC
Online: fallout.bethesda.net

Switch consoles in high demand, shorter supply

By AUSTIN CARR
Bloomberg

I was late to the whole Animal Crossing thing, but a few days ago I, too, decamped for a virtual island utopia, where I can breathe fresh digital air, chase butterflies, plant bright tulips and fish for sea bass (so many sea bass). Thanks to best-selling (and surprisingly therapeutic) games like Animal Crossing: New Horizons, the Nintendo Switch has become a massive hit during the pandemic. There's just one problem for Nintendo: It can't make them fast enough.

The inventory crunch serves as a reminder of how crucial supply chain management is in the COVID-19 era. From PCs and smartphones to tablets and wearables, the current batch of winners and losers of the hardware market will likely be decided by which companies can build enough products to meet demand.

Nintendo was unprepared for the sales surge and is now said to be scrambling to ramp up production and procure key electronic parts. The big question: Will the Japanese company be able to fix its supply chain woes before demand wanes?

In February, as the coronavirus was spreading around the globe, Nintendo started to see early indications of supply constraints. Component shortages in China were reportedly affecting factory output in Vietnam. Switch shipments to Nintendo's home country of Japan were delayed due to supplier bottlenecks, an alarming prospect for the hits-driven business, which had potential blockbuster games like Animal Crossing and Minecraft Dungeons coming out in the spring.

By the following month, the hardware shortages followed the virus' spread around the world. The Switch was nowhere to be found in North America at Amazon, Best Buy, Target or Walmart.

Nintendo is now purportedly aiming to boost its production to 22 million units this fiscal year, a remarkable trick considering the Switch is already three years old. That's more than Nintendo sold in the U.S., its biggest market, from the console's debut in 2017 to last year. However, one analyst suggested retail stock won't catch up to demand until June.

While sold-out inventory is a good problem for Nintendo to have, it could fail to fully capitalize on the moment. Many people bored at home may opt instead to purchase a PlayStation from Sony or Xbox from Microsoft, which said it has managed to resolve its supply chain challenges.

Meanwhile, I'll be living a sun-kissed life in Animal Crossing, where, incidentally, I was just gifted a virtual Nintendo Switch. Apparently, it's far easier to get one on my digital island paradise than it is in real life.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



Teeming with violence

'Extraction' belongs, in many ways, to another world

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Extraction" is set in the Bangladesh capital of Dhaka, one of the most densely populated cities in the world. It's in this urban sea of people and traffic that Chris Hemsworth's battle-scarred mercenary engages in a torrent of gun fights, car chases and hand-to-hand combat.

Produced with the Marvel-trained muscle of Joe and Anthony Russo ("Avengers Endgame," "Captain America"), "Extraction" wasn't shot in Dhaka but in Thailand and Ahmedabad, India. In India, it was one of the largest Hollywood productions to set down on the subcontinent. The throngs there doubled for Dhaka and populated "Extraction," a teeming movie made very obviously before the pandemic era of social distancing.

"There were thousands of people watching each day and erupting at the end of each take. It was like being in the Colosseum," Hemsworth said in an interview by video conference from his home in Australia. "It's interesting now to go: Would you be able to pull that off post-this? It would be very different."

"Extraction," which is currently streaming on Netflix, is the directorial debut of Sam Hargrave, the stunt coordinator on "Endgame" and other films and the former stunt double of Chris Evans' Captain America. It's a familiar kind of kinetic action movie featuring lengthy takes and violent choreography,

but it benefits greatly from the atmosphere of an exotic, lesser seen and overwhelming locale. And, right now, "Extraction" is easily the biggest new spectacle arriving on any screen anytime soon.

The film re-teams Hemsworth with the Russos, a year after "Endgame," in a script penned by Joe Russo a decade ago. He adapted it from the graphic novel "Ciudad," which is set in Paraguay's Ciudad del Este. But a couple of years ago, when the Russos tapped Hargrave to direct, they went looking for a new city.

"There were a few projects that were circling Ciudad del Este as a location, one in particular at Netflix. When we came up with the idea to flip it to Sam, we started looking for another, fresh location," said Joe Russo. "We had spent some time in Mumbai on a promotional tour, and that's where we got the idea to do it in Bangladesh."

Hargrave first scouted Dhaka in 2017, in between the shoots for "Infinity War" and "Endgame."

"It's very densely populated but it has an energy and vibrancy that's unique," said Hargrave. "You couldn't look in any direction that's not unique to the Western eye."

Films set in far-flung locations with a white protagonist have sometimes been criticized for relying on "white savior" tropes, a charge that has been lobbed by some at "Extraction." Hemsworth plays Tyler Rake, a mercenary hired to rescue the son of an Indian drug lord. He soon finds himself double-crossed and fighting legions to shield a boy (Rudhraksh



“
It's [Dhaka] very densely populated but it has an energy and vibrancy that's unique. You couldn't look in any direction that's not unique to the Western eye.

Sam Hargrave
director, "Extraction"

Jaiswal) for reasons he's not even himself sure of.

The cast is an exceedingly international one, including the Bollywood stars Randeep Hooda and Manoj Bajpayee. Since launching in India in 2016, Netflix has increasingly prioritized reaching the subcontinent's 1.3 billion people. Reed Hastings, Netflix's chief executive, has previously forecast that the company's next 100 million subscribers will come from India, and it has poured some \$400 million over 2019 and 2020 into expanding India-specific content. (Netflix declined to say how much "Extraction" cost to make.)

For the Russos, they see "Extraction" as an extension of the globe-spanning scale of Marvel, brought to a different genre and a smaller-screen platform.

"Joe and I got to see not just the fandom but the filmmaking community around the world," said Anthony Russo. "Having opportunities to tie into talented filmmakers from every corner of the globe is very exciting to us."

The Russo brothers are currently editing their next film, the crime drama "Cherry," remotely. They say they are, like much of the industry, trying to conceive and plan for how productions of any kind — let alone huge, rough-and-tumble films like "Extraction" — can resume in the months ahead. The Directors Guild recently formed a committee led by Steven Soderbergh to examine possible on-set solutions.

That makes the visceral, peopled realm of "Extraction" a vision of a recent but, at least temporarily, vanished movie world. To Hemsworth, it was a thrilling one.

"It ratcheted up the pressure of shooting within those places being so densely populated," said the actor, recalling elaborate action scenes with hundreds of people. "Sam threw us in a location that added to it tenfold."

The action-thriller "Extraction," starring Chris Hemsworth, left, is now streaming on Netflix.

NETFLIX/AP

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Hemsworth finds a worthy action pic in 'Extraction'

BY LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

Tyler Rake sounds like a Mad-Libs action hero name. When you add to the mix that this character actually, literally kills someone with a rake, it starts to veer into parody territory. That's why it's somewhat surprising that the film built around that wonderfully silly name, "Extraction," is entirely sincere and also pretty fun.

"Extraction" is a straightforward shoot-'em-up about a jaded mercenary, Mr. Rake, played by Chris Hemsworth, who's hired to save the 14-year-old son of a drug lord from another drug lord in Bangladesh. It doesn't do anything to push the genre forward, but it's better than you might think, existing comfortably somewhere on the action flick spectrum between Tony Scott and Peter Berg.

Much of that rests on Hemsworth's (very large) shoulders. The Australian actor hasn't had the easiest job finding solid roles outside of Thor. He's always good even when the movie isn't, and obviously has some tricks up his sleeves that belie his ac-

tion-hero physique. But many of his leading man roles that don't have anything to do with the God of Thunder have come and gone without much fanfare. So it makes a certain amount of sense that "Extraction" is Marvel-adjacent. It's written by Joe Russo (one half of the Russo brothers who have directed a handful of Marvel movies, including "Avengers: Endgame"), directed by Marvel stunt coordinator Sam Hargrave and based on a graphic novel ("Ciudad").

The graphic novel origins help explain "Tyler Rake," but that name is about the extent of the comic book elements in the actual film. And, to be fair, "Extraction" even knows it's ridiculous, hence the rake and the fact that the 14-year-old asset Ovi (Rudhraksh Jaiswal) walks up to the line of making fun of it at one point.

The film begins at the end, showing Tyler Rake (it just feels more right to say his full name) bloodied, battered and near-death on a bridge, having blurry flashbacks to some feet in the sand before cutting to two days earlier in Mumbai. (Don't hate "Extraction" for its clichés;



NETFLIX/AP

A hardened mercenary's mission becomes a soul-searching race to survive when he's sent to Bangladesh to rescue a drug lord's kidnapped son in "Extraction," with Chris Hemsworth, left, and Rudhraksh Jaiswal.

they're just part of the fun).

It won't shock you to learn that Tyler Rake is a bit of a loner who keeps his living quarters in shambles, but you get the sense that he always knows where the bottle of Oxy is. A woman (Golshifteh Farahani) comes to him with the job to save the kid, whose father is in prison, and Tyler Rake sets off to Diaka to track him down. There, the criminal underworld plays out in broad daylight, with crime bosses, child soldiers, corrupt

police and an overall vibe of instability populating the streets. Tyler Rake finds the kid easily enough, but then things start to get more complicated when he discovers that he's not the only one looking for Ovi (and ready to kill to get him).

But don't despair; Tyler Rake has about two hours of nonstop fight in him before he gets to that bridge and the blurry flashbacks. He'll fight, and win, against anyone who comes in his way—even a group of kids. He doesn't

kill any of them, though. He just kind of injures and disables the "Goonies from hell."

The word "distraction" has started to lose all meaning this deep into our home lockdowns, but there is a certain comfort in cutting up with a big, silly action pic like "Extraction." It reminds you of something you might have spent money on to see in an ice-cold theater on a hot summer day.

"Extraction" is rated R for strong bloody violence throughout, language and brief drug use. Running time: 118 minutes.

Stuntmen are increasingly Hollywood's go-to action directors

BY JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Some of today's top action directors were first doubles for Brad Pitt, Neo and Wolverine.

Increasingly, filmmakers are coming from the ranks of stuntmen and stunt coordinators, whose years of accomplishing complicated shots, managing the risks of cast and crew and working intimately with stars have given them a foundation for the task of directing—especially in action movies.

"Extraction" is the directorial debut of Sam Hargrave. Before Hargrave got behind the camera, he doubled for Chris Evans on "Captain America" and Hugh Jackman on "Wolverine," and coordinated stunts on blockbusters like "Avengers: Endgame" and the "Hunger Games: Mockingjay" movies.

Hargrave is the latest in a lineage of stuntmen who have gone from stepping in for actors to directing them. It's a fairly recent career pathway thanks largely to the success of Chad Stahelski ("John Wick") and David Leitch ("Atomic Blonde").

A brief history of notable stuntmen turned directors:

Hal Needham: A trailblazer for stuntmen-filmmakers, Needham performed stunts on films including "The French Connection" and "How the West Was Won" before he penned the script to



NETFLIX/AP

Actors David Harbour, left, and Chris Hemsworth being directed by Sam Hargrave, center, for a scene in "Extraction." Hargrave is the latest in a lineage of stuntmen who have gone from stepping in for actors to directing them.

"Smokey and the Bandit." He convinced Bert Reynolds, for whom he had doubled, to let him direct. They remained a regular team, with Needham directing Reynolds in "Hooper," "The Cannonball Run" and "Stroker Ace." Needham has been quoted

as saying: "Screw the dialogue; let's wreck some cars."

Ric Roman Vaughn: The son of stuntman Fred Vaughn, one of the founding members of Stunts Unlimited, Vaughn performed stunt work in "The Last of

the Mohicans," "The Crow" and "Lethal Weapon 2." He transitioned to directing in 2001's "In the Shadows," and followed that up with "Snitch," with Dwayne Johnson, and last year's "Angel Has Fallen."

Chad Stahelski and David Leitch: A chiseled duo with martial arts skills and stunt expertise, Stahelski and Leitch have done more than anyone else to raise the profile of stunt coordinators. They've been leaders in the field since founding the action design company 87Eleven in 1997. Leitch was Pitt's stunt double in "Fight Club" and doubled for Keanu Reeves in "The Matrix." Stahelski choreographed fights in "300" and coordinated stunts in "The Expendables."

They stepped into filmmaking with the slickly stylized and hyper-violent "John Wick" franchise (Stahelski directed, Leitch produced). Leitch, himself, helmed "Atomic Blonde," with Charlize Theron, and "Deadpool 2."

Nash Edgerton: The brother of actor Joel Edgerton, Nash has been a longtime stuntman, doubling for Ewan McGregor's Obi-Wan Kenobi, and doing stunt work in "The Thin Red Line," "Superman Returns" and "Zero Dark Thirty." But Edgerton also continually made short films, some with his brother, and eventually made his feature directing debut with the 2008 neo-noir "The Square." In 2018, he directed the comedy "Gringo," with David Oyelowo and Theron.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



A24 Films

John Magaro appears with the title character in Kelly Reichardt's "First Cow."

Oscars interrupted

A critic's guide to the next awards show if movie theaters don't reopen this year

By JUSTIN CHANG
Los Angeles Times

Six weeks and an eternity ago, when movie theaters were about to shut down due to the coronavirus outbreak, a few industry observers quipped that Elisabeth Moss was clearly now a shoo-in to win the Academy Award for lead actress. It wasn't an entirely facetious suggestion: Moss is unsurprisingly superb in "The Invisible Man," an above-average studio genre film that, in a more straightforward year, might be a long shot for awards consideration.

But in a moviegoing season that was cut abruptly short in March, the joke goes, "The Invisible Man" is suddenly not a long shot but a potential front-runner. Not just one of the year's early critical and commercial standouts, it may also be one of the only ones.

That assumed two unfortunate outcomes: First, that movie theaters don't reopen this year at all. Second, that the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, which requires features to play in theaters to qualify for Oscar consideration, wouldn't adjust its rules, dates and deadlines accordingly. On this latter front, the academy has shown flexibility: On Tuesday, the group's 54-member board of governors voted on a series of rule changes in response to the global pandemic that will temporarily relax the normally strict requirements for Oscar consideration, including the requirement for a theatrical release.

What will this year in film look like, with major studio titles pushed back to fall and winter release dates (for now), major festivals like Cannes eyeing postponement or cancellation, and innumerable independent films in even worse danger than usual of not



Bleecker Street

Julia Garner stars in "The Assistant," inspired by the Harvey Weinstein scandal.

finding their audiences?

I haven't a clue, and I suspect that anyone who claims they do is being either naive or disingenuous. The old industry maxim beloved by the late screenwriter William Goldman — "Nobody knows anything" — has rarely seemed more apropos.

One thing I do know: You could, in theory, hold the Oscars (on Zoom) next month, restricting voters only to movies newly released in U.S. theaters in the first three months of 2020, and still emerge with a solid, even commendable, slate of nominees. The simple reason for this is that the Hollywood studios have never cornered the market on cinematic quality, and well before the awards-season grind kicks in, every month brings brilliant work from filmmakers who rarely land on the academy's radar — and are no less deserving of attention for it.

Yes, you have to look harder for these movies, using a finer-toothed comb than you might in November or December. You have to put anti-genre snobbery aside and be comfortable with subtitles (horror!) and actors with unfamiliar names and faces.

It takes discernment to find worthwhile achievements, to look beyond the hype of the obvious and the over-hyped. And discernment too often goes missing when the industry's annual gala-hopping, screener-cramming popularity contest gets underway.

I have my own means of combating the Hollywood bias that often sets in during those fall months. Every January, I start a fresh list of every good and great new movie I see, logging performances, screenplays and directorial achievements that I think may be worth remembering at year's end. I do this not because I want to think about awards season year-round, but because I don't want anything to slip through the cracks when it finally arrives.

So, let's take a look at my 2020 list as it currently stands.

Note that while the New York/Vulture writer Nate Jones recently conducted his own thought experiment in this vein — a smart, amusingly exhaustive speculation on how the 2020-21 awards season would play out if no more theatrical releases were to emerge for the rest of the year — my version of this exercise has zero predictive value. It's simply what I would personally single out in the top eight feature categories: best picture, directing, acting and writing. It is also my early memo to myself and others: No matter what the future holds, these films and performances will still be

worth seeing and remembering.

One ground rule: I am excluding 2019 movies that were re-released earlier this year.

Best picture

Under the circumstances, it wouldn't be unreasonable to cap this category at five, going back to decades of historic academy practice. But why impose limits when the year has already given us more than five terrific movies? In keeping with the academy's preferred number of late, let's go with eight.

"The Assistant," Kitty Green's riveting sidelong view of sexual abuse in the entertainment industry, is as essential a #MeToo movie as Leigh Whannell's expertly crafted thriller "The Invisible Man"; in both movies, the bullying enemy is both unseen and inescapable.

"Bacurau," Kleber Mendonça Filho and Juliano Dornelles' rich, strange genre mashup set in a futuristic Brazilian backwater, deservedly won a major prize at Cannes last year, as did "Beanpole," a shattering drama of postwar reckoning from the scarily gifted 28-year-old Russian director Kantemir Balagov.

If forced to pick a winner at this point, I'd have a hard time choosing between two new American indie classics: "First Cow," Kelly Reichardt's tale of two friends on a mission in 19th-century Oregon, and "Never Rarely Sometimes Always," Eliza Hittman's tale of two friends on a mission in contemporary Pennsylvania and New York.

And finally, two masterly meditations on grief from Europe: "I Was at Home, But ...," from German director Angela Schanelec, and "Vitalina Varela," from Portuguese auteur Pedro Costa.

Director

The academy didn't nominate any women for best director in its most recent edition, despite having no shortage of opportunities to do so. This year, even with a tight three-month window, it could make considerable amends by nominating an established American master like Kelly Reichardt ("First Cow"); an out-of-the-box talent like Angela Schanelec ("I Was at Home, But ..."), who hails from the rigorous Berlin School; and gifted up-and-comers like Kitty Green ("The Assistant") and Eliza Hittman ("Never Rarely Sometimes Always").

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

WEEKEND: MOVIES



Kino Lorber

Two young women (Vasilisa Perelygina, left, and Viktoria Miroshnichenko) search for meaning and hope in "Beanpole."



Columbia Pictures

Will Smith and Martin Lawrence in "Bad Boys for Life."

FROM PAGE 20

That leaves one final slot, and while Kantemir Balagov ("Beanpole") and Pedro Costa ("Vitalina Varela") both beckon, I'd give that spot to Leigh Whannell for making the most of what could have been a routine Hollywood reboot in "The Invisible Man." (Between Whannell and Green, it's been quite a year for Australian talent already.)

Lead actress

If there's something all five of my choices here excel at, it's the ability to hold a close-up. That's true of the remarkable newcomer Sidney Flanigan, whose every downward glance is a quiet revelation in "Never Rarely Sometimes Always," as well as Julia Garner, an "Ozark" Emmy winner who gives an exquisite silent scream of a performance as the title character in "The Assistant."

And speaking of silent screams: The very first shot of "Beanpole" is a slow zoom-out from the face of Russian actress Viktoria Miroshnichenko, stunning as a woman who embodies the shellshock of a war-torn nation. Vitalina Varela won the actress prize at last year's Locarno International Film Festival for enacting a version of her own life story in the aptly titled "Vitalina Varela," her every close-up is a tour de force of expressive stillness.

And of course, Moss is as marvelous in "The Invisible Man" as she was in 2019's "Her Smell" (a movie that also came out early in the year).

That still barely scratches the surface of this astonishingly rich field. Eliminate these five and you're still left with the

ferocious action showcases of Betty Gilpin ("The Hunt") and Blake Lively ("The Rhythm Section"); Miroshnichenko's "Beanpole" co-star, Vasilisa Perelygina; Maren Eggert's ferocious depiction of grief in "I Was at Home, But..."; and Lesley Manville's affecting exploration of a woman's battle with cancer in the British-Irish drama "Ordinary Love."

Lead actor

I recently caught up with Ben Affleck's bruising turn as a high school basketball coach battling grief and alcoholism in "The Way Back" and have nothing to add to the general praise; it stands alongside his career-best performances in "Gone Girl" and "Hollywoodland." He's easily the biggest star name here, followed by Lakeith Stanfield, as effortlessly charming a romantic lead in "The Photograph" as you always suspected he'd be.

John Magaro is wonderful in "First Cow" as an Oregon Trail chef trying to get by the only way he can (because bakers can't be choosers). And finally, two terrific actors from overseas: Pierfrancesco Favino for his gripping performance as the Sicilian mobster turned whistleblower Tommaso Buscetta in "The Traitor," and Levan Gelbakhiani, as a Georgian dancer who falls for a member of his troupe in the gay romance "And Then We Danced."

Right behind them all: Kris Hitchen, persuasively burning the candle at both ends in Ken Loach's bleak drama "Sorry We Missed You," and Garrett Hedlund, breathing unexpected fury and pathos into the cliché of the reformed Klansman in "Burden."

Supporting actress

All hail the Brazilian legend Sonia Braga and her fierce turn as a small town's mean, boozy conscience in "Bacurau." Andrea Riseborough, one of the medium's great chameleons, brings her signature ferocity to bear on her role as a woman rejecting a community's racism in "Burden," while Talia Ryder, using just a few words and a lot of expressive silence, etches an indelible portrait of a friend indeed out of a few words and silent gestures in "Never Rarely Sometimes Always."

I was equally impressed with Mia Goth's exquisite vulnerability and Miranda Hart's delightful comic dithering in "Emma," in which both actresses remind us that Jane Austen's characters are at once familiar and inexpressible.

Supporting actor

I didn't much care for "The Gentlemen," but I loved Colin Farrell's performance (a shade more than Hugh Grant's) as one of the many men caught up in Guy Ritchie's warmed-over Cockney caper. I also loved Josh O'Connor's hilarious work in "Emma" — he's like Gummy in a priest's collar — and Udo Kier doing what only Udo Kier can as a gunman with the small town of "Bacurau" in his sights.

As the wilier, more calculating of two friends seeking their fortune in the Old West, Orion Lee complements Magaro beautifully in "First Cow," to the point where he almost qualifies as a lead. I suppose you could say the same thing of Martin Lawrence reprising a decades-old

role in "Bad Boys for Life," but the joy of his performance this time is that he fully embraces his second-banana role — and steals the movie.

Original screenplay

The gonzo B-movie bravura of Mendonça Filho and Dornelles' screenplay for "Bacurau" deserves recognition here, as does the spare, incisive, observational storytelling in Green's "The Assistant" and Hittman's "Never Rarely Sometimes Always." This would also be a welcome opportunity to salute the playful, inventive play with genres and languages in Corneliu Porumboiu's heist thriller "The Whistlers," as well as the hyper-elegant, mile-a-minute dialogue of James Sweetney's winsome romantic comedy "Straight Up."

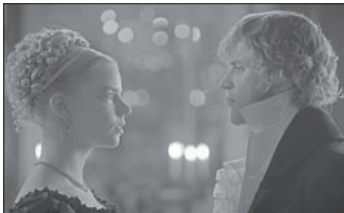
Adapted screenplay

Here's where my experiment admittedly crashes to earth. The year has already given us three solid possibilities in Eleanor Catton's sparkling adaptation of "Emma"; Kelly Reichardt and Jon Raymond's "First Cow," based on Raymond's novel "The Half Life"; and Leigh Whannell's extensive reimagining of "The Invisible Man" from H.G. Wells' science-fiction classic. Not a bad start, but the pickings are otherwise slim. I'll leave the other two slots blank for now, in symbolic recognition that — as much fun as it's been to speculate about an alternates-Oscars — we can't wait for theaters to reopen, and for the movies to return with a vengeance.



Focus Features

Sidney Flanigan in "Never Rarely Sometimes Always."



Focus Features

Anya Taylor-Joy and Johnny Flynn in a scene in "Emma."



Universal Pictures

Betty Gilpin leads the cast of "The Hunt."

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Confessions of a longtime guidebook writer

Let me pack you along for a day on the road to help demystify what goes into the making of a guidebook.

While working in Europe, a guidebook writer's entire day's experiences are dedicated to research. I need to be a lint brush, picking up local tips, leads and feedback. My secret research weapon is taking time to interview people running the hotels and restaurants already listed in my guidebook. They think I'm friendly and gracious to take time to chat, and while I truly enjoy it, it's also the best way for me to learn what works and what doesn't, along with the pitfalls and frustrations experienced by people traveling with my guidebooks.

In Madrid, my hotel didn't serve breakfast so I needed to find a place to eat. If it's a problem for me, it's a problem for my readers, too. I asked the receptionist to recommend a good churros place (greasy cigar-shaped doughnuts Spaniards dunk in hot chocolate for breakfast). He said, "Americans want Starbucks ... it's over there." I need to balance my interest in having people enjoy the old-fashioned cliché and the modern reality. I track down the churros place and dunk a few churros (it's a chain cafe ... not much local energy), and treat myself to a latte and blueberry muffin (we're all just human) at Starbucks. Next year, both options — with frank appraisals — will be in the book.

Over coffee, I review my goals for the day. A smart schedule is critical. Checking hotels before 10 a.m. is bad news — people haven't checked out yet — and the staff is still busy with breakfast. It's hard to see a room. Checking late in the afternoon is also bad — everyone's checked in for the day and places are reluctant to show rooms. Prime hotel-checking time is 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Restaurants are a big priority for any guidebook researcher. There are two hours of prime restaurant review

time each evening. I take a minute to locate the places on a map and consider all the reader feedback I've received (both for existing places and tips on new places). Then it's off to drop in at as many eateries as possible. I can't eat everywhere ... but I can talk to customers in each place. My reward — just before the kitchens close — is to eat at my favorite place.

Menus and the mechanics of ordering can be frustrating and need to be sorted out. If a stew is a local must-eat experience and big enough for two, I learn if splitting is allowed. If the place is mobbed after 8:30 p.m., I'll suggest ways to avoid the line. If the ambience is great on the ground floor and lousy downstairs, I'll say so. If it's dead on hot evenings (as many indoor places are), I make a note.

A researcher needs to physically visit the sights and do the walks. When I researched Madrid, I dropped by the cloistered nuns (just as I propose in the guidebook). Without being able to see anyone, I talked into the dark wood of their lazy Susan (me in English, them in Spanish), and ordered their cheapest cookies. This year, the sisters made lemon shortcake. I measured the experience and affirmed that it'll work for my English-speaking readers.

A balance time between the major sights all travelers will do, and obscure and new sights. On that same Madrid visit, I dropped by the ancient temple Egypt gave to Franco for helping save antiquities from the rising Nile while building the Aswan Dam. Everyone says it has the best city view in town. My experience: The temple is underrated, and the view overrated. A big wide view of Madrid only makes you wonder why anyone would build a city in this nondescript piece of Iberia. But nowhere else in Europe can you see an actual Egyptian temple standing in a park.

I filter out information on temporary exhibits and special events that will be gone next year. I don't care if the Queen's sharing her box at the Royal Albert Hall ... if my readers can't do it next year, it doesn't exist, as far as I'm concerned.

After 30 years of this work, it stays fresh and there's always something new to learn. I still pull doors that say



Rick Steves



ETBD staff

Rick Steves' office while on the road is his hotel room.

push and bump my nose on doors that say pull. When I get ripped off, I celebrate — I learned a scam and can now share it with my readers. And, somehow, I'm still as thrilled as ever to ride the train across the causeway approaching Venice ... to step out of a gondola on the tip of a Swiss Alp ... and to dunk those churros into my hot Spanish chocolate.

Rick Steves (www.ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Enjoy, support nature in Germany with NABU

It's official — no large-scale events are to take place in all of Germany through at least Aug. 31 in the never-to-be-forgotten year of 2020. As if that news weren't bad enough, the prospect of being able to travel to many of the European countries hardest hit by the coronavirus is almost nil during the summer is looking ever more unlikely. At this point, the only glimmer of hope seems to be that travel might gradually be allowed within the country and to those bordering nations who clearly demonstrate they have the virus under control. But this too is very much a waiting game.

So what's a travel-loving time to do? There's a never-bad time to be seeking out and researching the next travel destination, even when going so far as to actually book flights and accommodation seems a bit premature.

But sometimes we long to do something more immediate and sensory. And a place that needs us as much as we need it is the great outdoors.

There's never been a better time to explore the world outside one's window, and there's one organization that's ready to help in this endeavor: the Naturschutzbund Deutschland, or Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union. Referred to as NABU for short, this non-governmental organiza-



Karen Bradbury

tion founded in Stuttgart in 1899 tasks itself with the preservation of habitats and biodiversity; the promotion of sustainability in agriculture, forest management and water supply and distribution; and bringing the importance of nature conservation to the fore. The organization made up of more than 700,000 members and sponsors is divided into some 2,000 groups acting at the local level. NABU counts about 40,000 volunteers within its ranks, who donate 5.5 million hours of their time each year. NABU members pay an annual fee of at least 48 euros for an individual or 55 euros per family.

Although all NABU's group activities such as guided tours, conservation efforts and discussion evenings are on hold, the organization still has much to offer, including tips on how to enjoy nature throughout the year and how to contribute to conservation efforts through one's own observations. A host of NABU's activities make for wonderful family endeavors. Although the

English-language website of the NABU website has limited content, the Google translate function does a decent job with its German-language pages.

Bird counting: From May 8-10, a nationwide bird-watching activity is being organized. As happens on the second weekend of May each year, "The Hour of Garden Birds" is a call to the public to spend an hour by one's window or balcony, in a park or other area of human settlement, noting the numbers and species of feathered friends observed. Last year as part of the initiative, nearly 1.7 million birds were identified and counted, creating a critical data set that helps ornithologists better understand the state of bird populations and thus get a better grip on conservation activities.

To participate, set aside one hour for observation and count all the birds you see, even those flying past or in neighbors' gardens. Although birds are at their most active in the morning, it's not essential to observe them at any particular time of day. To get to know some of the most common bird species in Germany, it's handy to use a camera while spotting and then look up their names at vogeltrainer.nabu.de/gartenvogel/. Once info on bird species and numbers has been collected, it can be entered on the NABU website.

Butterflies: NABU is also currently monitoring butterfly



iStock

The German organization NABU monitors butterfly populations and facilitates other nature-friendly programs.

populations. The organization is asking observers to report sightings of target species including the admiral, aurora, little fox, peacock, mourning coat and lemon butterflies until the end of May. Observations can be recorded by clicking the green binoculars icon on the Naturgucker de homepage. Online: tinyurl.com/yd3hliiv

Save a bee: The NABU website offers invaluable information about how to easily help the small creatures that make their homes in our gardens; for example, the honeybee. In early spring, a future queen bee is looking for a suitable nest. Learn the do's and don'ts of what makes for an ideal bee habitat,

and how to save a bee whose strength is sagging by means of a teaspoonful of sugar dissolved in warm water. Online: tinyurl.com/yahgs8w4

Local projects: NABU members form part of a working group to support stork populations through the creation and upkeep of suitable habitats in the Rheinau wetlands around Mainz, Wiesbaden and Bingen. In spring, members of NABU in Stuttgart help lead storks across the busy roads as they make their ways from their winter quarters to their spawning grounds. Find the NABU nearest you and get involved — many activities happily make space for non-members as well.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

The trail's starting point is on Highway K57 in Andernach. If using a GPS, point it to Laacherstrasse 60 in Andernach. When you reach that destination, head a little farther out into the country and you'll find the parking lot and the trailhead.

FOOD

There's a McDonald's located conveniently along the highway outside the nearby town of Mendig. Otherwise, it's advised to bring your own food; there are several places to comfortably stop for lunch.

INFORMATION

English-language details online at traumpfade.info/traumpfade-rhein-mosel-eifel/rhein-hoehlen-und-schluchtensteig

—Gregory Broome



PHOTOS BY JACNIE BROOME

Traumpfade Hoehlen und Schluchtensteig, a 12-kilometer hike in southwestern Germany, starts with this serene countryside facade. But the trail proceeds through a variety of stunning landscapes as it goes along.

What dreams are made of

Germany's 'Dreampath' near Andernach is a series of breathtakingly scenic vistas

BY GREGORY BROOME
Stars and Stripes

In the absence of many other leisure activities, one reliable pastime in this period of quarantine is to look wistfully at old photos of when you actually left your home and did stuff.

Your mileage may vary on this. The reminiscing might spark resilience and optimism, prompting you to look forward to future adventures. Or it might send you spiraling in the other direction, lamenting the days of confinement already endured and the unknowable future ahead.

My own journey through a time machine of Facebook photo albums yielded a largely positive emotional response. Knowing that my family and I have experienced so much together over the years made me certain that more such experiences are forthcoming.

When we do venture out again, I expect our first tentative steps to be not in the direction of an airport, train station or major city. I believe we'll head into the fresh air and open spaces of nature.

Archived photos of one recent hiking trip offered both fond memories and future inspiration. The Hoehlen und Schluchtensteig, or cave and gorge trail, is part of Germany's outstanding set of 'Traumpfade, or Dreampath, hiking trails. This particular 7.5-mile excursion, located outside the city of Koblenz in southwestern Germany, about an hour and a half from Wiesbaden and under two hours from the Kaiserslautern Military Community, is perhaps the most remarkable hiking trail we've ever walked.

The hike starts at an isolated parking lot in the midst of vast fields extending in all directions. But that scenic stillness belies the rich diversity of landscapes to be found farther along the trail. You'll pass through expansive farmland and stretches of lush forest, walk along creeks in deep valleys and revel in breathtaking views from on high. And you'll find memorable highlights along the way, from caverns to waterfalls to railroad tracks and other brief interactions with civilization.

At the time of writing, access to Traumpfade Hoehlen und Schluchtensteig was off limits to tourists from Friday to Monday. Check availability on the hike's website, traumpfade.info, before heading there. But when it's time to set foot on a hiking trail once again, this is the place to start making new memories.

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A walking stick lies abandoned in the caverns of the Traumpfade Hoehlen und Schluchtensteig in Andernach, Germany. The caverns are a memorable feature and a welcome cooling-off point.



This piece of art on a house along the trail lets hikers know they're still on the right track.



Traumpfade Hoehlen und Schluchtensteig spends most of its 12 kilometers deep in nature, but it occasionally brushes up against civilization, as with this bridge near the trail's caverns.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

A beef filet with boiled new potatoes and asparagus with melted butter sauce come together for a wedding anniversary dinner that will make you forget restaurants are closed because of a pandemic.

A romantic night in

With a favorite restaurant closed, husband makes anniversary dinner, dessert to remember

BY MICHAEL ABRAMS
Stars and Stripes

The coronavirus has forced the cancellation not only of crowd pleasers like March Madness and Oktoberfest, but of personal events like funerals, birthday celebrations and family gatherings.

In my case, a wedding anniversary tradition had to change this year. Usually we go out for dinner to Trattoria Romagnola, one of Darmstadt, Germany's best Italian restaurants, and where we celebrated our wedding years ago.

With it closed and takeout not quite setting the tone for an anniversary, it looked like dinner at home was the right choice.

Fortunately, besides going out to eat, I do like to cook. So for this special date, I tied on the old chef's apron and whipped up a magical meal for my wife. If you're in a similar situation, feel free to borrow a few of my ideas.

After a glass of champagne as an aperitif (and something to toast with), we had salmon tartare as an appetizer.

The chef mixed chopped avocado and salmon with creme fraiche, lemon zest and dill, then topped it with more salmon marinated in lemon juice, spices and dill. Quite exquisite.

Germans consider asparagus the "queen of vegetables," so with it being in

season, it was on the menu.

In Germany, most of the asparagus is white, unlike the green version known to most Americans. It remains white because it is grown underground in long mounds of earth. Green asparagus grows above ground. And unlike the green variety, it must be peeled.

The asparagus was served with boiled new potatoes and a broiled filet. Many people like asparagus with hollandaise sauce, but we prefer just melted butter with a squirt of lemon juice and dill.

While we could have chosen a different wine with each course, we settled for a nice dry rosé from Germany's Pfalz region for the whole meal.

Although the chef is known for his delicious tiramisu, we opted for something more out of the ordinary — strawberries with balsamic vinegar, mascarpone, mint and black pepper.

It sounds a little strange, but the tartness of the balsamic, the sweetness of the strawberries, the freshness of the mint, the smoothness of the mascarpone and the bite of the pepper made for a perfect finish to the meal — followed by an espresso and a digestif, of course.

When things get back to normal, we will probably enjoy a makeup dinner at the Trattoria. At least then we won't have to do the dishes.

abrams.mike@stripes.com
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BALSAMICO STRAWBERRIES

About 10 minutes, plus 4 hours marinating in refrigerator
Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

1 pound fresh strawberries
2-3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
8 oz. mascarpone (we used a 250 ml container)

8-10 mint leaves chopped

Fresh ground black pepper
Lemon zest (optional)

Directions

Hull the strawberries and slice them in half lengthwise into a bowl. Add the balsamic vinegar and grind black pepper over the mixture. Stir carefully until all the berries have been coated, then cover and refrigerate four hours.

Shortly before serving, mix in the mint.

If using, stir lemon zest into mascarpone. Spoon and spread mascarpone onto individual dishes, top with strawberry-balsamic mixture, add a grind of pepper and decorate with a mint leaf. Serve and enjoy.

My advice: never skimp on the quality of your balsamic vinegar. It makes a big difference for this recipe.

Meatballs even better on Day 2

BY LINDA GASSENHEIMER
Tribune News Service

Tasty, light meatballs in a rich pasta sauce is an American favorite. The meatballs in this recipe are made with bread soaked in water and squeezed dry. This makes them very light and fluffy.

The meatballs taste even better the second day. If you have time, make extra and serve them for another quick dinner. Complete the meal with a washed ready-to-eat Italian-style salad.

Helpful hints

- Any type of onion can be used instead of frozen chopped onion.
- A quick way to chop sage is to snip the leaves with a scissors.
- A food processor can be used to combine the ingredients. Try not to over process them. The meat will become too compact.
- Use a flat spatula to turn the meatballs. A spoon might break them.

Countdown

- Place large pot of water for pasta on to boil.
- Make the meatballs.
- Cook the spaghetti.
- Complete the dish.

Shopping list

Here are the ingredients you'll need for tonight's Dinner in Minutes.

To buy: 1/2 pound 95% lean ground sirloin, 1 small bunch fresh sage (or dried sage), 1 small bottle reduced-sodium pasta sauce, 1 package frozen chopped onion, 1 package raisins, 1 loaf whole wheat bread, and 1 package spaghetti.

Staples: olive oil, garlic, egg, salt and black peppercorns.

SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS

Ingredients

2 slices whole wheat bread
1/2 pound lean ground sirloin
2 medium garlic cloves, crushed
8 fresh sage leaves, chopped (or 1 teaspoon dried sage)

1/2 cup frozen chopped onion
2 tablespoons raisins
1 large egg
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
3/4 cup reduced-sodium pasta sauce
1/4 cup water (for sauce)
1/4 pound spaghetti

Directions

Soak the bread in 1 cup water until soft. Combine ground sirloin, garlic, sage, onion, raisins and egg in a bowl or food processor. Remove bread from water and squeeze out excess water. Blend into meat mixture. Add salt and pepper to taste. Form into balls about 2 1/2 inches in diameter. It should make 4 meatballs.

Heat olive oil in a small nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Brown the meatballs on all sides, about 5 minutes. Mix the pasta sauce and water together. Lower the heat to medium and add the sauce. Simmer gently 10 minutes, carefully turning the meatballs once.

While meatballs simmer, add the spaghetti to the boiling water and cook 9 minutes or according to package instructions. Drain and divide between 2 dinner plates. Serve meatballs and sauce over the spaghetti.

Yields 2 servings

Travel destinations trying to stay visible

Tourism officials want you to dream of a vacation during your coronavirus confinement. They're using everything from bingo to live webcams to keep you engaged. And they're renovating and reaching out to prospective visitors during the pandemic as they prepare for your return.

But it may take more than that. The World Tourism Organization had projected that international tourism arrivals would grow 3% to 4% this year. It now estimates that arrivals could plummet by 20% to 30% because of the novel coronavirus. That's a loss of \$30 billion to \$50 billion in spending.

Gi Antognelli, general manager of the Monaco Government Tourist and Convention Authority, has two focuses for the principality's comeback.

"We're making sure to keep Monaco in the minds and dreams of people currently confined in their homes," he says. "Simultaneously, we're working on our rebound plan."

That seems to be the idea for most tourism destinations. But how do you draw people to you when you're so far away? How do you plan for a rebound that may or may not come?

"These are dark days," says Jamie Simpson, a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board. "But we do know the sun will soon shine again on Los Angeles."

One way to keep people thinking about L.A. is through social media. The tourism bureau has encouraged Angelenos to post photos using the hashtag #LAthroughMyWindow to highlight the beauty of Southern California.

Among the contributions are snapshots of California sunsets and beaches and the recent supermoon. Similar social media initiatives are underway in New York and San Francisco.

In Reno, Nevada, and the Lake Tahoe area, tourism officials have been promoting virtual visits through a network of live webcams. You can gaze at empty ski slopes in California and Nevada, or the almost undisturbed lakeside of Kings Beach, Calif. Tourism officials have also encouraged hotels and resorts to share more pictures and videos with the world, reminding people that they're still here.

Destination DC, a nonprofit that supports Washington tourism, has a microsite, DCTOgether, with links to social media initiatives and virtual tours. You can find out which hotels are still open or play DC's Social Distancing Bingo, an online game that connects you to what's happening in the nation's capital.

In Monaco and elsewhere, tourism leaders are moving on to the next phase of the comeback: outreach efforts to start bringing visitors back to the area. "We need to make sure that no one forgot us," says Antognelli, the Monaco tourism head.

Persuading large conventions to return is the first order of business. A single conference, which can bring tens of millions of dollars to an area, is a critical step to recovery. And then there are individual visitors to be enticed with deals and incentives.

— Christopher Elliott
Special to The Washington Post

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WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREA VILLARI/Stars and Stripes

Zoom with a view

Download a videoconference backdrop for a virtual window to the world

ANDREA SACHS
The Washington Post

A magnanimous colleague or family member might describe my backdrop during online meetings as a blizzardy polar landscape, a whiteout so thick it obscures all natural features. But let's be frank: It's a blank wall.

For the time being, our private and working lives are restricted to the indoors, with limited views beyond our window frames. Most days, we may only glimpse the outside world through the keyhole of Zoom, the ubiquitous videoconferencing service. If we're lucky, a friend or co-worker might be sitting on a deck or rooftop and offer us a peek of their panorama. Otherwise, we are spending an inordinate amount of time staring at kitchen counters, piles of shoes and, yes, unadorned walls.

For an escape from the domestic drudgery, a slew of travel industry players have created scenic backgrounds for Zoom participants. The California-based company is not tracking the proliferation of backdrops, but Amie Dehner, a Zoom spokesperson, said, "We are delighted to know that users are employing travel-themed virtual backgrounds and that those backgrounds enhance their meetings."

The free images are your mental ticket to travel. (The websites provide instructions on how to download the photos.) You just need to pick a destination or scene, preferably one that will also please the crowd on the other side of the screen. To help, we have curated a sampling of backgrounds that will hopefully move to the foreground one day soon.

Transportation

Upgrade your desk chair (really, your

kitchen table chair) for a business-class United Polaris seat, one of a half-dozen images from the airline. Or give yourself a promotion and settle into the cockpit. Close out your meeting with a moment of calm: a plane wing coasting over a cushion of clouds, with no self-quarantined land in sight. If your spirit animal is a dolphin, then download an oceangoing photo from Royal Caribbean, such as one of CocoCay, the Bahamian island playground owned by the cruise line.

Nature and theme parks

Lose yourself in the great outdoors without leaving the indoors. The Wilderness Society has assembled 10 videos and 10 photos of national parks, wilderness refuges, monuments and other natural sanctuaries. Warning: You might end up hypnotizing your colleagues with the videos of swaying grass in Colorado's San Juan National Forest and swirling clouds in the John Muir Wilderness in California. Explore the many properties and active adventures of the Xanterra Travel Collection, which owns biking and walking tour companies, as well as hotels in or near national parks, such as the Grand Canyon Railway & Hotel in Arizona and the Cedar Creek Lodge, which sits 18 miles outside Glacier National Park in Montana. The National Park Foundation shares six parks from coast (Cape Cod National Seashore in Massachusetts) to coast (Olympic National Park in Washington state). The egret has landed, thanks to the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, which offers eight landscapes, including two of the stateliest suspension bridge. Even though Cinderella and Prince Charming are self-quarantining in her eponymous castle, you can still enjoy the Magic Kingdom with more than a dozen photos from Disney theme parks around the world, in-

cluding Paris, Shanghai and Orlando, Fla. Bucks County, north of Philadelphia, adds a pinch of Sesame Place to its collection of soothing images, which includes a covered bridge, a lavender farm and barrels of beer at a brewery.

Beach and snow destinations

With Uncommon Caribbean, you'll be pardoned for wearing work clothes — at least from the waist up — on the beaches of such island getaways as St. John, St. Croix, Barbados and Anguilla. To avoid dragging imaginary sand into your imaginary bungalow, opt for a resort pool in St. Thomas, Nevis, Antigua or the Dominican Republic. For kicks, pretend to hitch a ride on a sailboat or sea lion in La Paz, the capital of Baja California Sur in northwestern Mexico. Feel the Bahamian waves lapping at your back with tropical settings from the Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board. Pump up the party vibe with a snapshot of a Junkanoo, the boisterous street parade celebrated throughout the Bahamas. If you'd rather be skiing than sunning, choose among eight wintry images from Liftopia. You will find perfect conditions: groomed trails, powdery snow and no crowds.

U.S. cities and states

Liven up meetings with a game of Name That State. For example, use a backdrop of Denali, Cumberland Island, the DeZwaan Windmill, Parkview Field or Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, and see if your colleagues can pick that member of the union. (Cheat sheet: Alaska, Georgia, Michigan, Indiana and North Carolina.) For a city version, check out pics from Galveston, Texas; Seattle; San Diego; New Orleans; Philadelphia; or San Francisco, which includes a video of sea lions jolling on Pier 39 at Fisherman's Wharf.

Cultural landmarks

Become a character a la "Night at the Museum" with backgrounds from New York City's American Museum of Natural History, such as a diorama of a giant squid doubling as a face mask for a sperm whale. Hide your Harry Potter obsession with a photo of the New York Public Library's stuffed stacks, book train or literary lions, who are inspiringly named Patience and Fortitude. Zoom back to another challenging — but, spoiler alert, victorious — time period with the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia. If you are late signing onto a meeting, you have an excuse: You were helping George Washington cross the Delaware. Even if you live in a basement apartment, you can create the illusion of height with Skydeck Chicago, the observation platform on the 103rd floor of the Willis Tower.

Travel trope

A number of specialized travel websites have created a grab bag of images, so you can mix it up during the workweek and keep your colleagues curious about where you might take them next: to see hot-air balloons in Cappadocia, Turkey (Virtuoso), a penguin colony in South Africa (Trip Savvy), the neon-lit skyline of Shanghai (Smarter Travel), the mysterious moai on Easter Island (Airfarewatchdog) or moonwalkers at the Space Center Houston (The Points Guy). Lifestyle photographer Gary Malin has released a handful of his pieces to the public, such as a seaplane view of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. If you need to step out of a meeting to, say, shush your barking dog or console your wailing child, don't click off the video function. Instead, switch to Malin's beach photo displaying the message, "I Am Busy," spelled out in balloons.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Celebrating with friends

Prom festivities move online as schools remain closed

BY LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press

In party dresses or come as you are, with colored lights flashing in their bedrooms and teachers-turned-DJs spinning, high schoolers have turned to virtual proms to salvage at least one slice of fun and tradition for the Class of 2020.

And they're getting help from familiar brands like Teen Vogue and Jack in the Box, with both serving as hosts to thousands of teens.

Celebrities, too, are taking on prom: The "Get Out" actress Allison Williams was a guest DJ for Zoom partygoers in Baton Rouge, La., and "Jack Ryan" star John Krasinski was joined by Billie Eilish when he threw a prom live on YouTube.

"It's terrible that it's happening to your class, but I hope you're having a good time anyway," Williams told about 100 teens, staff and guests April 16 at the prom hosted by the Baton Rouge Youth Coalition, an after-school program.

The theme was "Royalee," an acknowledgement that while some kids had already bought their dresses before lockdown, others never got the chance and were welcome in T-shirts.

On top, Williams sparked in a strapless sequin dress, joking that she couldn't get up and dance because "there are sweatpants hanging."

Alauna Stults, 17, in Findlay, Ohio, will wear a blue beaded two-piece outfit when she attends an online prom May

9 thrown by the party apparel rental service Charlotte's Closet and an event planning site, My School Dance. Charlotte's Closet is donating dresses to teens in need, including Alauna.

"I was looking forward to prom," she said. "I was pretty pumped up about it. I was planning on going with a group of my friends, but it's really cool we can still dress up and do everything we would do for a prom, like doing makeup."

‘Prom is definitely one of those bigger life moments when you're growing up, even if you find it to be corny or not cool. It definitely still is something that's a moment you look back on and remember.’

Lindsay Peoples Wagner
Teen Vogue Editor-in-Chief

High schools and cheer teams have thrown virtual proms of their own as social media has filled up with sweet moments among families. Dads have taken their dressed-up daughters for living room spins for a dance or two, and teens have organized home proms among parents and siblings.

"Prom is definitely one of those bigger life moments when you're growing up, even if you find it to be corny or not cool. It definitely still is something that's a moment you look back on and remember," said Teen Vogue Editor-in-Chief Lindsay Peoples Wagner.

The site expects about 5,000 teens to

attend its virtual prom May 16 on Zoom. Organizers are working with high schools around the country to set up separate rooms so kids can be with their friends as celebrity co-hosts pop in and DJs get busy.

YouTuber Emma Chamberlain, H.E.R. and "Euphoria" star Storm Reid are expected.

"It will be really interactive, and that's going to be the fun part of it," Peoples Wagner said.

"Everybody was really happy. It was really classy. I didn't expect that many people, but it actually ran pretty smoothly."

Ironically enough, at least one online school, the public K-12 Washington Virtual Academies, hosts an offline prom each year for the students it serves across the state of Washington. Not this year. Prom will be online, just like school.

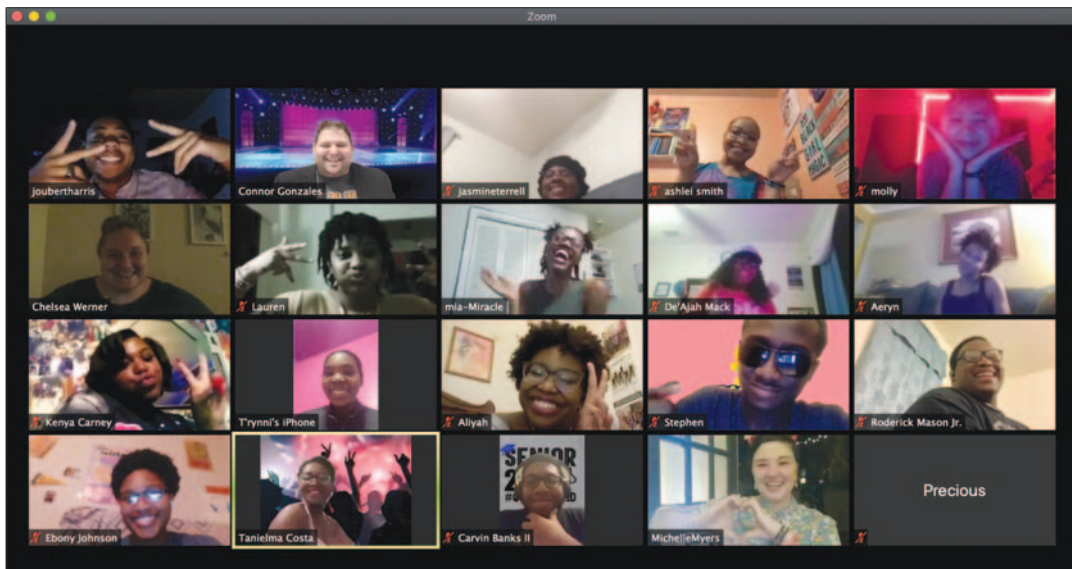
"People have reached out to us saying, 'hey, how do we do a virtual prom?' But that's not something we've previously done, so we're embarking on this adventure just like schools all over the U.S.," said Summer Shelton, the head of school.

Offline, the school hosts prom in Tacoma, its home base. Students travel from as far away as Spokane to attend, staying in hotels. The date for Shelton's virtual prom had not been finalized but will likely be in June. The school has about 500 juniors and seniors.

"This is one of the most looked-forward-to nights of the year," Shelton said. "Right now they're dealing with disappointment, understandably, and trying to move past disappointment and saying, 'OK, what do we do now to make this special?'"

Donna Sheperis, an associate professor of counseling at Palo Alto University's Los Altos, Calif., campus, sees other ironies for a tech-savvy generation missing out on prom.

"They also crave human connection," she said. "They crave a chance to dress up and dance with their friends. They crave some time that's just for them. And this year, they can't get it."



High school seniors from Louisiana attend a virtual prom via Zoom on April 16 hosted by the Baton Rouge Youth Coalition.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Homebrewed ESCAPISM

COVID-19 closed bars, but it hasn't stopped kitchen counter hops

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

On March 14, the day after the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a national emergency in the United States, I decided to take up an activity that I had abandoned decades ago.

I brewed some beer.
I became part of a trend. While states imposed stay-at-home orders, brewpubs closed, and people lost jobs and tried to economize, homebrewing in America has exploded in popularity.

"Our industry in a recession does well because not as many people are working, people are more cost-conscious and they have time on their hands," said David Stuart, national sales manager for Ohio-based LD Carlson, a wholesale distributor of beer- and winemaking supplies.

Homebrewing also provides an escape from dwelling on the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's so easy to get wrapped up in the news, constantly feeling like you need to be updated," said Gary Glass, director of the American Homebrewers Association. "So it's a way to get away from what's going on out there in the world and do something that's fun, and later drink that beer that you brewed."

May 2 is National Homebrew Day. Normally, homebrewers come together to make the same official recipes for side-by-side competition. This year, it will be a "virtual big brew," in which people brew at home with a suggested recipe (Pangea Proxima Polar IPA) and do a toast on social media. More than 1,700 people from around the world have pledged to join.

Northern Brewer, a major supplier of homebrewing and winemaking equipment in America, says business has shot up by 40% to 50%. But not all shops are seeing an upturn. Gina Fox's Salem Brew Supply, in Salem, Ore., has had a slight dip in sales since they moved from in-store sales to home deliveries. But she's optimistic.

"I think with the tight community that we have, the homebrewing community, and with the fact that once people start homebrewing they usually continue down the road, I feel like we could survive this," she said.



ANDREW SELSKY/AP

Homebrewed beer is bottled March 28 by the author, Andrew Selsky, in Salem, Ore.

Hazy IPAs are trendy these days, but many customers are asking for "classic hops" — like cascade, centennial, chinook — that were popular years ago, said Mike Brennan, sales manager in the western U.S. for the homebrew division of BSG HandCraft, a wholesaler of brewing supplies.

"They're dusting off their old equipment, the fermenters, and they're going back and brewing some of those classic-style IPAs, those more bitter IPAs, like we used to do," he said.

I myself brewed long before India Pale Ales became the rage in America.

Back in the early 1990s, my first attempt, a brown ale, was a failure: I had added too much water. My third and last attempt back then, an Anchor Steam Beer style, turned out fine. It was a lot of work, including sterilizing all the equipment and bottles in the confines of our small apartment in Brooklyn. I had other things to do, though honestly I should chalk up my lack of persistence to laziness.

Over the next 30-odd years, my wife and I moved frequently, with the brew kit accompanying our household goods each time. Finally, she suggested I dump the barrels, along with the tubes, rods, gauges and other paraphernalia that look like they could have come from the workshop of a scientist, or sorcerer.

Then last December, a big cardboard box with Northern Brewer's logo arrived at my doorstep. This must be a mistake, I thought. I didn't order this. I called our son Sam, who lives in Washington, D.C., and is a homebrewer, thinking he ordered it for himself. Turns out it was his and our other son, Blaine's, Christmas present to me.

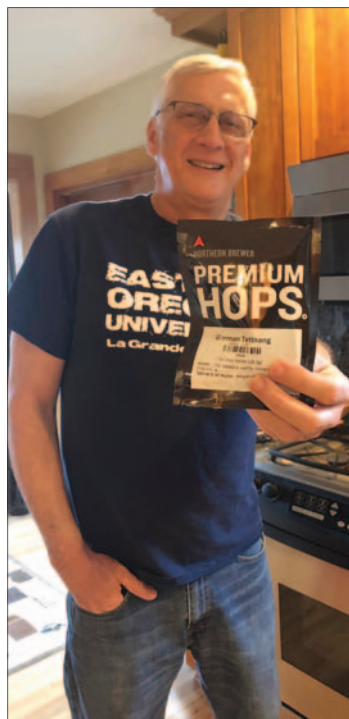
I was delighted to get such a thoughtful gift.

It remained in a closet for almost three months until, on an idle Saturday, I brought it to the kitchen and began brewing a batch of German-style hefeweizen.

It did take my mind off the pandemic. I put some music on, made sure the brewing kettle didn't boil over, poured in hops and malt extract and, using a timer, followed the other steps.

One month later, it was time to pop the cap off a bottle and sample the fruits of my labor. It was delicious.

Learn how to brew the Pangea Proxima Polar IP at homebrewersassociation.org



ZOE SELSKY/AP

The author holds a bag of hops for his homebrewed German-style hefeweizen March 14. He poured it into a glass (left) and tasted it April 11.

WEEKEND: FOOD & LIFESTYLE



Windowsill gardening

Kitchen scraps good for growing some green

By EMILY HEIL
The Washington Post

The isolation imposed by the coronavirus has awakened a latent homesteading spirit within many of us. The proliferation of sourdough was an early indication that people were seeking, even in small ways, self-sustainability, as grocery-store shelves were often frustratingly bare.

Now, there's a wave of people attempting farming on a (very) small scale. The latest trend to sprout up on social media: images of green onions, presumably purchased at the store, their roots submerged in water glasses and tucked onto sunny windowsills, where their owners hope they will grow.

This trend has many roots, some practical — perhaps it's a way to entertain cooped-up children, or maybe to ensure a supply of some fresh vegetable. Others are more abstract. Participating in coronavirus-era mini trends, whether it's goofy TikTok dances or re-creating classical works of art with pets, can be fun. And a green thing, sprouting in the sun, feels hopeful, something we all could use now.

For Christopher Koentz, a pharmacist and a brewer in Illinois, the motivation was a little of both. A friend had given his family a bundle of scallions from a restaurant that was closing because of the virus. He and his wife had used them in ramen and risottos, but they still had plenty left over. So when his wife saw a photo someone posted of their own propagation efforts, they threw some in a glass and waited.

It began as an effort to give their four young children something to do, but as he saw more people sharing photos of their own little crops, it also created a feeling of community. "It's a way to connect with people doing other interesting stay-at-home things," Koentz says.

Growing such a connection is easier than mastering the "Savage" choreography. Of all the foods you can grow from kitchen scraps — and there are lots, including onions, garlic, shallots, carrots, beets, ginger and avocados — green onions are by far the simplest, experts say. The instructions are straightforward, says gardening author Nikki Jabbour: Cut them down to the whites and a little bit of green, pop them in a glass with a little bit of water, and you'll see new growth in about a week.

For those looking to expand beyond the scallion, bear in mind that propagating might not yield what you're hoping for. At least not right away, notes Kevin Espiritu, the founder of Epic Gardening, an organization aimed at educating

people around the globe about plants. Full-size onions are biennials, he says, meaning that if you root them, they won't make another onion right away. People propagating carrot tops aren't going to get another carrot; they'll get carrot greens, he says. "They might be disappointed with some things, but green onions are going to give you the thing you're looking for," he says.

The greens from carrots, beets and other root vegetables can be used in a pesto or thrown into a green juice, even if they won't satisfy your fantasy of snacking like Bugs Bunny on a bounty of homegrown vegetables. If you plant onions or garlic cloves in a small amount of soil in a sunny spot, they will send up green shoots that you can use like chives or scallions, Jabbour notes.

For another easy-growing vegetable, she suggests taking the bottom of a celery bunch and placing it in a shallow bowl of water. Again, you won't get full stalks of celery, but the greens that will spring up are good for flavoring.

Espiritu says anyone looking for a "201 level" windowsill project might consider rooting basil, a process that will yield a tiny basil plant that can be potted in soil. For that, he suggests taking a 4- or 5-inch length of stem from the bunch you got at the grocery store, preferably one cut from a main stem below a spot where a set of leaves has sprouted. Remove those leaves and place in a few inches of water, and once it puts out fine roots from the base, it can be planted, he says.

Jabbour recommends that no matter what kind of vegetable you are trying to grow, you should read up on it a bit first. Not all herbs, for example, root in water the way basil or mint does, she notes. "Just do a little research so you don't spend two weeks waiting for the parsley to put out roots," she says.

Both Jabbour and Espiritu said they've seen a massive uptick in interest in home gardening, particularly from beginners, since the coronavirus began spreading. But will the sudden rush of attention outlast the stay-at-home orders that have boosted it?

"That's the million-dollar question," Espiritu says. In his experience, about 40% of people try gardening don't stick with it. To get people hooked, he says, he encourages them to start small and easy, just like with a green onion on a windowsill. "I try to give people an early win," he says. "Whatever happens, it's good for people to get back to nature even if it's in a small way."

And Jabbour says that even if the coronavirus doesn't produce a generation of gardeners, something as simple as watching a little onion grow might be the balm we need. "It's wonderful, mentally, just to see something green."

Classic beans, rice combo gets a Peruvian makeover

By JOE YONAN
The Washington Post

I've been thinking about beans and rice a lot lately. The combination got me through my poorest years, when I was putting myself through college.

At least twice a week, I'd sit for hours at Austin's Les Amis cafe and eat a big bowl of brown rice topped with saucy black beans, salsa, sour cream and sometimes guacamole. I can't remember the price, but it couldn't have been more than a few bucks, because that was all I could afford.

That bowl of beans and rice became, on many days, the only thing I would eat. And it was satisfying and nutritious enough to see me through.

I've been thinking about all this as the coronavirus pandemic has devastated the livelihoods of countless people who will undoubtedly be looking, just as I

was, for similarly cheap, nutritious dishes.

One of Peru's traditional dishes, tacu tacu, is basically pan-fried beans and rice. The bean of choice is the creamy canary bean (aka mayocoba or Peruano), and the main spice is ají amarillo paste (made from Peru's favorite chile). But you can also use pinto or another favorite bean (especially if you made a big pot of them at the beginning of the week), and Tabasco or another vinegary pepper sauce makes a fine substitute for amarillo. This often comes topped with steak and/or a fried egg, but it's delicious and hearty on its own, especially with a crunchy onion salsa.

It uses leftover white rice, but you can substitute whatever grain — preferably at least day-old and cold — you might have in your fridge.

PERUVIAN BEANS AND RICE (TACU TACU)

Ingredients

For the salsa criolla:
½ small red onion, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
¼ teaspoon ají amarillo paste (may substitute 1 teaspoon Tabasco or other pepper sauce)
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
For the tacu tacu:
3 tablespoons grapeseed, safflower or other neutral vegetable oil
½ small red onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
½ teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
1 teaspoon ají amarillo paste (may substitute 2 teaspoons Tabasco or other pepper sauce)
2 cups cooked or canned canary beans, drained and rinsed (may substitute pinto beans, from two 15-ounce cans)
1 cup cold (preferably day-old) cooked white rice
1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano or 1½ teaspoons dried
1 lime, cut into wedges
Directions
Make the salsa: In a medium bowl, combine the onion with enough cold water to cover, and let sit for at least 10 minutes, then drain. Toss with the cilantro, lime juice, ají amarillo and salt.

Make the tacu tacu: In a 10-inch nonstick skillet over medi-

um-high heat, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil until shimmering. Stir in the onion and garlic and cook, stirring, until lightly browned, 5 to 6 minutes. Stir in the salt and ají amarillo, and scrape the mixture into the bowl of a food processor. Wipe out the skillet.

Add 1 cup of the beans to the food processor and puree briefly until mostly smooth but still chunky. Scrape the mixture into a large bowl. Add the remaining 1 cup beans (left whole), the rice, parsley and oregano to the bowl and stir to thoroughly combine.

Return the skillet to medium heat and pour in another 1 tablespoon oil. Add the rice-and-bean mixture and use a spatula to spread it around evenly and lightly pack it down. Cook until deeply browned on the bottom, about 7 minutes. Remove from the heat, invert a plate (preferably with no rim) on top of the skillet, and carefully flip both over to land the bean-and-rice cake bottom-side up onto the plate. Return the skillet to medium heat, pour in the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, and slide the cake back into the skillet. Cook for another 7 minutes, or until deeply browned on the other side, then invert the plate and flip the skillet over again to land the cake onto the plate. If the cake cracks or breaks apart, just pat it back together.

Top with the salsa and serve hot with lime wedges.
2-4 servings



Peruvian Beans and Rice (Tacu Tacu) make a cheap, tasty meal.

AUBREY PICK
Ten Speed Press

WEEKEND: MUSIC

FROM AMY WINEHOUSE
TO ZZ TOP

27

GREAT MUSIC DOCUMENTARIES

Top: "Amy," released in 2015, documents the life and tragic death of British singer-songwriter Amy Winehouse, who struggled with substance abuse before her death in 2011 at 27.

Right: The 2019 doc "ZZ Top: That Little Ol' Band from Texas" is a deep dive into the music and mystique of the enigmatic trio that has featured the same lineup for 50 years.

ZZ Top



By JON BREAM
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Consider them education. Or entertainment. Music documentaries provide an opportunity to celebrate — or learn — about old music, the history of music or new music. Or just your favorite artist.

For the equivalent of a semesterlong course, Ken Burns offers two spectacular marathons — the 10-episode "Jazz" (2001) and the eight-part "Country Music" (2019). However, those deep dives are not easy to track down.

Here are some recommended music docs that can be found on YouTube, DVD/Blu-ray or streaming services like Netflix.

"Don't Look Back" (1967): No film captures the whirlwind of early pop stardom better than cinema verité pioneer D.A. Pennebaker's chronicle of Bob Dylan's 1965 electric tour of England. He'd split up with Joan Baez, switched from folk to rock and turned the Beatles onto pot. The must-see film also features Dylan flipping cue cards for what became the "music video" of "Subterranean Homesick Blues."

"The Decline of Western Civilization" (1981): Punk rockers were rarely seen on film until Penelope Spheeris' landmark portrayal of the L.A. punk scene, featuring frantic performances by X, Black Flag and others. To add cinematic drama, she interviewed the musicians under one light bulb as they carped about suburban strip malls and their own urban squalor.

"This Is Spinal Tap" (1984): Rob Reiner's monumental mockumentary is fiction, but it captures the true essence — and excesses and inanities — of a big-time touring band. Christopher Guest, Michael McKean and Harry Shearer star as a popular British heavy-metal band whose drummers keep dying in bizarre ways.

"Gospel According to Al Green" (1984): After dogged pursuit, Robert Mugge, who has made music docs on the likes of Gil Scott-Heron and Sonny Rollins, finally landed an interview with the soul star turned preacher and filmed the seventh anniversary of his church in Memphis. The complexities, love and happiness of Al Green are here in abundance.

"Truth or Dare" (1991): If you think Madonna was the boldest, most brilliant superstar of the MTV Age, you might find this to be a remarkably insightful backstage glimpse of a rock-concert tour.

"Meeting People Is Easy" (1998): This film is a snapshot of that moment when a band, specifically Radiohead, explodes into superstardom. Declared Gen X's answer to "Dark Side of the Moon," "OK Computer" finds Radiohead on tour coping with living up to the critical acclaim and numbing questions of music journalists. In one scene, frontman Thom Yorke invites a concert crowd to sing "Creep" while he holds out his microphone and smirks. OK, Thom.

"Buena Vista Social Club" (1999): Celebrated German director Wim Wenders follows the great American guitarist Ry Cooder to Cuba as he tracks down aging musicians to record an album and then perform in Amsterdam and New York. Although choppy, the film elevated the music and the musicians into deserving global prominence.

"Standing in the Shadows of Motown" (2002): This loving tribute to the Funk Brothers, the 13 musicians who (often anonymously) played on hundreds of Motown records, finds them revisiting their old Detroit haunts and backing modern stars like Gerald Levert, Ben Harper and Joan Osborne in a concert of Motown music.

"Metallica: Some Kind of Monster" (2004): After an underwhelming album and the departure of its longtime bassist, these metal heroes went through lots of expensive psychotherapy and aggravating gripe sessions about creative differences and addiction issues. Metallica never sounded so agitating.

"Shut Up and Sing" (2006): Two-time Oscar-winning documentarian Barbara Kopple followed the Dixie Chicks for three years after their lead singer's controversial comment about President George W. Bush and the Iraq War. Backlash and threats in the conservative world of country music were swift and lasting. This film becomes a fascinating study of the relationship between celebrities, politicians and the media.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEW

Apple's latest makes bold show of unprettiness

By MIKAEL WOOD
Los Angeles Times

"Fetch the Bolt Cutters" is Fiona Apple's third consecutive album with a title to suggest that one of pop music's flesh-and-bloodiest songwriters has cold, hard machinery on her mind.

Eight years before this one, in 2012, there was "The Idler Wheel..."; seven years before that one, in 2005, there was "Extraordinary Machine." Certainly you can hear evidence of Apple's fixation in the records' highly percussive arrangements, which often emphasize quasi-industrial rhythms — complicated beats tapped out on drums and cans and pieces of scrap metal — over the type of swooning melody that defined early hits like "Criminal" (recently used to show-stopping effect in "Hustlers") and "Shadowboxer."

But taken together, the titles also get at the way Apple, 42, appears to regard her music as a device to process trauma: "I know none of this will matter in the long run," she sings in "I Want You to Love Me," which opens the album, her fifth overall, "But I know a



Fiona Apple

Fetch the Bolt Cutters (Epic)

sound is still a sound around no one." Render the pain just so, her thinking seems to go, and you might contain its ability to continue hurting or staining you — like a dishwasher or a rock tumbler or an engine burning up toxic fuel.

Not that her interest in gadgets extends to an assembly-line approach. In the near-decade since "Idler Wheel..." the singer has spent a decreasing amount of time outside her home near Venice Beach, Calif., even as her influence has spread among younger artists such as Lana

Del Rey, Billie Eilish and King Princess; she recently gave a rare interview to the New Yorker in which she described how tortuous she found the idea of reentering the fray to promote a new project.

Indeed, you have to wonder if she elected to release "Fetch the Bolt Cutters" — months earlier than she's suggested unspecified suits wanted her to — because the COVID-19 pandemic would provide some cover for the publicity she was already planning to avoid. (The album's title quotes a bit of dialogue from the British crime drama "The Fall" in which Gillian Anderson's character calls for the tool required to open a locked door.)

The result of Apple's self-imposed social distancing is the stunning intimacy of the material here — a rich text to scour in quarantine. Her idiosyncratic song structures, full of sudden stops and lurching tempo changes, adhere to logic only she could explain, which forces you to listen as attentively as though a dear friend were bending your ear; thus dialed in, you notice the array of close-miked textures in the music, much of which she

laid down at her house over the past five years with a cozy group of collaborators including drummer Amy Aileen Wood, guitarist David Garza and bassist Sebastian Steinberg (familiar to '90s alt-rock fans from his stint in Soul Coughing).

In "Heavy Balloon," about the difficulty of keeping the weight of depression aloft, Steinberg's slithering bass is an almost tactile presence, while the album's memory-jammed title track ends with the sound of Apple's beloved dogs barking their heads off — a bug of home recording that she turns into a feature.

Apple delivers that number in a breathy, slow-and-low mode that can harken back to her sultry early work. But mostly she seems determined to display the frayed edges of her voice, as in the swaggering "Under the Table" and "Newspaper," which doesn't have a tune so much as a furious array of loosely connected notes. In "Relay" and "Rack of His," she's essentially rapping, piling syllables off top of each other with thrilling abandon; in "Ladies," she repeats that loaded term so many times that it starts to shed its meaning.

Basically, you'd need to go back to the later parts of Nina Simone's catalog to find another pop vocalist as eager as Apple is to make such a show of unprettiness — a shared result, perhaps, of exiling oneself from a business you can't stand.

As for her lyrics, Apple has never cut closer to the bone: "Well, good mornin', good mornin'," she sings in "For Her," "You rapped me in the same bed your daughter was born in." Yet as unflinchingly personal as this music feels, Apple isn't always mining her own troubled autobiography as she was widely assumed to be doing in her teenage-phenom days. "For Her," she told The New Yorker, was actually inspired by watching Brett Kavanaugh be confirmed to the Supreme Court; in "Newspaper," she identifies with a woman unfortunate enough to have ended up with her ex.

I watch him let go of your hand, I warsee stand between you," she tells the woman over a clanking punk-cabaret groove. She's seething, but she's empathizing — a feeling machine operating at full tilt.

FROM PAGE 30

"The Wrecking Crew" (2008):

This tells the story of the anonymous Los Angeles studio musicians who played on "Good Vibrations," "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" and other 1960s hits. Hear from Wrecking Crew players — including guitarist Glen Campbell and pianist Leon Russell — and such stars as Cher and Herb Alpert. A must-see for liner-note readers.

"It Might Get Loud" (2009):

This is the best movie ever made about guitars — and one of the best rock docs, period. Oscar-winning director Davis Guggenheim explores guitars through the stories of heroes from three different eras — Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page, U2's the Edge and the White Stripes' Jack White. Turn it up to 11.

"Rush: Beyond the Lighted Stage" (2010):

Veteran heavy-metal documentaryans Scot McFayden and Sam Dunn examine the polarizing prog-rock Toronto trio, with endorsements from Jack Black and Billy Corry, but Rush frontman Geddy Lee admits his 10-year fascination with synthesizers was misguided.

"Searching for Sugar Man" (2012):

Sixto Rodriguez was a late 1960s/early '70s singer-songwriter forgotten everywhere except South Africa, where he became something of a cult hero. Decades later, two obsessive fans tracked him down in Detroit and brought him to South Africa for a series of concerts that became the subject of this Oscar-winning doc.

"History of the Eagles" (2013):

This three-hour warts-and-all doc celebrates the highs, lows, reunion and, above all,



Joan Baez and Bob Dylan are pictured in a scene from "Rolling Thunder Revue: A Bob Dylan Story by Martin Scorsese."

contributions of Don Henley and Glenn Frey. Other band members disagreed, but the music and the concerts keep on selling.

"20 Feet from Stardom" (2013):

This Oscar-winning documentary shines a spotlight on backup singers, including Darlene Love, Lisa Fischer and Judith Hill, proving that they have the voices to be front and center. Plenty of superstars, including Bruce Springsteen and Bette Midler, testify.

"Muscle Shoals" (2013):

It's another behind-the-scenes doc about two recording studios in the tiny Alabama town of Muscle Shoals where such classics as "Brown Sugar," "Free Bird" and "When a Man Loves a Woman"

rounded portrait details her life, art and issues with a compelling dramatic arc, even though we already know the ending.

"Beats, Rhymes & Life: Travels with A Tribe Called Quest" (2011):

In his debut as a director, actor Michael Rapaport explores the influential '90s jazzy, sophisticated hip-hop group — from their childhood roots to their bickering breakup. The film opts for drama over scrutiny, but Mary J. Blige, Common and the Beastie Boys all boast about Quest.

"What Happened, Miss Simone?" (2015):

It's not the personal mementos of potent singer/activist Nina Simone or the interviews with her daughter and ex-husband that make director Liz Garbus' profile so powerful. It's the live performance footage that speaks volumes about an often misunderstood force.

"Gaga: Five Foot Two" (2017):

About to release her change-of-pace album "Joanne," Lady Gaga fights heartbreak and loneliness, paranoia and fear, a painful nerve injury and a change in image and sound. The film — and perhaps Gaga's career — peaks as she prepares and pulls off her Super Bowl halftime performance in 2017.

"Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool" (2019):

Director Stanley Nelson Jr. takes a curatorial approach to paint a complete picture of the legendarily complex jazz man, with concert clips, interviews with associates, friends and lovers — and Minneapolis-reared actor Carl Lumbly narrating with Davis' distinctive rasp.

"David Crosby: Remember My Name" (2019):

Rarely have

we seen such an unvarnished, unflattering and revealingly real portrait of a rock star. Crosby gushes without a filter about having a lot of sex, taking too many drugs, making harmony-filled rock 'n' roll and being a complete jerk to his lovers and bandmates in the Byrds and Crosby Stills Nash & Young.

"Rolling Thunder Revue: A Bob Dylan Story by Martin Scorsese" (2019):

It's another Dylan/Scorsese collaboration (their first was the long-winded 2005 PBS doc "No Direction Home") about the bard's 1975-76 rambling, circuslike tour featuring Joan Baez, Allen Ginsberg and a revolving cast of characters. Overlook some fake-news interviews with Sharon Stone and others and appreciate some of Dylan's most magnetic on-stage performances ever on film.

"ZZ Top: That Little Ol' Band from Texas" (2019):

You don't get behind the shades and beards of Billy Gibbons, Dusty Hill and beardless Frank Beard. But you do get a history of the band and their sound. You learn how publicist Howard Bloom pumped up their image with Texas-sized hype for a record-setting tour on a Texas-shaped stage and how ZZ Top reinvented themselves as MTV darlings with unplanned beards.

"Miss Americana" (2020):

As Emmy-winning Lana Wilson surveys Taylor Swift's career, we watch the intensely self-aware superstar reveal her insecurities, creative process, love of cats, frustrations with fame and Kanye West, and obsession with being a "nice girl." But as she reaches her late 20s, she liberates her sound, politics and image.

WEEKEND: BOOKS

Master of short fiction

'If It Bleeds' reaffirms Stephen King's skill, creativity

By BILL SHEEHAN

Special To The Washington Post

Stephen King's affinity for the novella form goes back to the early stages of his long, prolific career. In 1982, King published "Different Seasons," a quartet of long stories that contained some of his finest work, and eventually led to some memorable film adaptations, among them "The Shawshank Redemption" and "Stand by Me." Since then, at roughly 10-year intervals, King has produced three similar volumes that have allowed him to play with a wide variety of themes, scenes and settings. The latest of these, "If It Bleeds," contains four new, exceptionally compelling novellas that reaffirm King's mastery of the form.

King, of course, has made good use of virtually every mode of storytelling: short stories, screenplays, novels, multimovie epics and what he referred to as his "novel for television," the miniseries "Storm of the Century." But the mid-length narrative suits his talents particularly well, permitting a degree of expansiveness while maintaining a controlled, disciplined approach to the material at hand. The results are stories that cover a surprising amount of emotional territory but can still be read in a sitting. "Mr. Harrigan's Phone," for example, is yet another reflection of King's sometimes baleful fascination with technology and its effects on our lives. At the heart of the story is the relationship between Craig, the adolescent narrator, and John Harrigan, retired billionaire and borderline Luddite. As their uneven relationship develops, Craig gifts the older man a cellphone. The gift is designed to facilitate "normal" communications, but this is, after all, a Stephen King story — those communications darken and change, connecting the world of rural Maine to the unknown world beyond. At its deepest level, "Mr. Harrigan's Phone" is about the lasting connections we sometimes



make despite seemingly insurmountable differences.

"The Life of Chuck" gets my vote as the collection's most original story. It opens on the image of billboards bearing the portrait of a middle-aged accountant named Charles Krantz. Each billboard bears the words: "39 GREAT YEARS! THANKS, CHUCK!" Who is Chuck? And what is the story behind those billboards? In time, we learn a good deal about this character as the story, constructed in three acts, moves backward in time to Chuck's early life. The result is a slightly surreal, wholly engaging narrative about dance, music, mortality and acceptance, and about the bedrock notion that all of us, like Chuck, contain multitudes.

"Rat" returns to one of King's recurring subjects: the problematic nature of the writing life. His protagonist, Drew Larson, is a struggling writer who has produced a half-dozen short stories, and

has tried and failed three times to finish a novel, each failure bringing with it a greater degree of psychological damage. "Rat" recounts Drew's final desperate attempt to bring a novel to completion. Isolated in a cabin deep in the woods of Northern Maine, he learns once again that art is a double-edged sword, one that can lead to exhilaration, despair and — in extreme moments — madness. An unpredictable, often hallucinatory narrative, this is one of King's definitive explorations of the dark side of the creative impulse.

The centerpiece of this volume is the title story. By far the longest story in the book, "If It Bleeds" is a fully developed short novel with multiple ties to King's recent fiction. The protagonist — and true hero — is Holly Gibney, the damaged, savant-like young woman who first appeared in 2014's "Mr. Mercedes," and who played a pivotal role in King's 2018 novel "The Outsider." "If It Bleeds" is, in fact, a direct sequel to "The Outsider," though it contains enough relevant detail to stand on its own.

As in "The Outsider," when Holly and a police detective tracked down an ancient vampiric creature, "If It Bleeds" finds her battling a similarly daunting monster. This time, though, she must do so on her own. Watching her overcome obstacles, among them her own fear, her troubled past and the disbelief of others, is one of the central pleasures of this book.

Holly is that rarest of creatures: a wholly admirable person. King's affection for her is evident on every page and adds a measure of emotional weight to the narrative. Holly has now appeared in five of King's novels, and I fully expect to see her again. Her latest appearance adds a welcome grace note to a collection filled with startling, sometimes unsettling pleasures. In "If It Bleeds," King continues to draw from a rich and varied reservoir of stories. At its best, his work remains deeply empathetic and compulsively readable. May he never run dry.

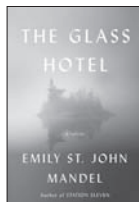
sense of being outside of time and space."

An ephemeral quality permeates the novel. Many of the characters are haunted and most of the story is told in flashbacks to various times in Vincent's life. As Mandel writes in the mind of Vincent: "It is possible to leave so much out of any given story." The thrill of "The Glass Hotel" is that the pieces do eventually connect, from Vancouver to the glittering skyscrapers of New York.

Characters are introduced at different times and collide throughout the novel to complete a portrait of Vincent's life and sketch their own stories too. There's Jonathan, an investor whom Vincent seduces and lives with as a trophy wife back in New York; Vincent's brother, Paul, whose journey takes him from heroin addiction to an artistic career kick-started by using his sister's personal videos without permission; and Walter, who never leaves the hotel, working as the property's caretaker for a decade after it closes.

There are no heroes here and only a couple characters who inspire much sympathy, but the unique structure keeps you turning the pages. At times, you'll find yourself flipping back to a chapter heading to find out if what you're reading happened in 1999 or 2004, but it's a thrill when the puzzle pieces start to fit together. Or, as Paul expresses it near the end: "The smallness of the world never ceases to amaze me."

The final chapter is haunting, taking readers full circle to those words spoken by Raphael about time and space ceasing to exist. It's a sense readers will enjoy as well when they lose themselves in Mandel's novel.



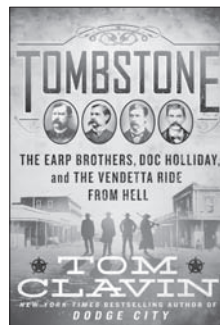
'The Glass Hotel' a tragic tale, cleverly told

By ROB MERRILL

Associated Press

How does one follow up a National Book Award nominee? With something completely different, of course. Emily St. John Mandel's new novel is more grounded in reality and smaller in scope than "Station Eleven," which imagined a theater troupe traveling across America 15 years after a mysterious flu killed most of the world's population. (That book is being talked about again because of the coronavirus pandemic.)

"The Glass Hotel" tells the story of Vincent, a young woman whose fate we know from the first sentence — "Begin at the end: plummeting down the side of the ship." — but it's the title that inspires the novel's central theme. "The Glass Hotel" is a more descriptive name for "The Hotel Cayette," an isolated establishment on the northern end of Vancouver Island. Vincent moves there with her mother as a teenager, wandering the woods and eventually working as the hotel bartender. The clientele pay top dollar to stay in this remote and luxurious place, "a glass-and-cedar palace at twilight" where, as general manager Raphael says to a prospective employee, "there's a



Old West feud comes to life in 'Tombstone'

By BRUCE DESILVA

Associated Press

In 1881, five Earp brothers gathered in hopes of finding their fortunes in Tombstone, Ariz., the last boomtown in what was still left of the untamed American West. They were relatively young men — Wyatt, the middle brother, just 31 — when they joined a growing community of shopkeepers, prospectors, gamblers, prostitutes and rustlers drawn by a silver strike in the nearby Dragoon Mountains.

As some popular accounts, including "Tombstone," the 1993 movie starring Kurt Russell, would have it, Wyatt and his older brother Virgil had forsaken their previous profession as lawmen, but that's not exactly true. Virgil was still a deputy U.S. Marshal, and he remained a lawman for nearly all of his time in Arizona.

Myths surrounding the Earps, Wyatt's pal Doc Holliday (who was far from the deadeye shot he's been made out to be), and the gunfight at the O.K. Corral are not the only obstacles facing a writer intent on telling the true story of Tombstone. Primary sources, including witness testimony in court proceedings and reports in the boomtown's two rival newspapers, are contradictory and laced with lies. And other accounts by observers and participants, including several books, are largely self-serving.

But in researching "Tombstone: The Earp Brothers, Doc Holliday, and the Vendetta Ride to Hell," western historian and former newspaperman Tom Clavin has a lot of additional material to draw on including previous histories of the town and well-researched biographies of many of the participants.

Readers who have a passing familiarity with the story will recognize the names of the key players: young Billy and Ike Clanton, Frank and Tom McLaury, Johnny Ringo, Frank Stilwell, Curly Bill Brocius, Texas Jack Vermillion, Sherman McMasters, Henry Hooker, Bat Masterson, Fred White, John Clum, Big Nose Kate Elder and John Behan. Clavin explores where they, and many others, came from and what they were doing before they arrived in Tombstone. He also describes the cultural and political climate of Arizona that contributed to the town's troubles.

With a former newsmans' nose for the truth, Clavin has sifted the facts, myths and lies to produce what might be as accurate an account as we will ever get of the old West's most famous feud.

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

“Gretel & Hansel”: We all know this one. Starving siblings Gretel and Hansel (Sophia Lillis and Samuel Leakey) seek out food and shelter in the woods and accept hospitality from a witch (Alice Krige) who has evil intentions. But this version, directed by Oz Perkins, injects new ideas into the familiar tale, aided in great part by its uniquely creepy aesthetics. The score integrates dark metal guitar-dominating hits with a moody full orchestra, while the dark cinematography and production design steer the audience into upside-down “Alice in Wonderland” tonal territory.

Some of the dialogue comes off as stilted and a bit chunky, which makes it difficult to get to know the characters, and some plot points don’t quite feel authentic in the created world. But whether intentional or not, altogether these elements make the film a great escape.

Also available on DVD:
“Arkansas”: Two criminals face off with a drug lord. Stars Liam Hemsworth, Vivica A. Fox, John Malkovich and Vince Vaughn.

“Bloodshot”: After a Marine (Vin Diesel) is resurrected as a bioengineered weapon, he seeks revenge against the person who murdered him and his wife.

“Garth Brooks: The Road I’m On”: The documentary follows the life of the country star.

“Gunsmoke: The Final Season”/“Gunsmoke: The Complete Series”: The CBS Western series about Kansas Marshal Matt Dillon (James Arness) developed from a radio show and ran from 1955 to 1975.

“Greed”: A retail mogul (Steve Coogan) attempts to salvage his reputation by throwing a lavish party.

“Humans: Complete Collection”: The British sci-fi series takes place in a world where humanoids are purchased for household use. Stars William Hurt, Katherine Parkinson, Colin Morgan, Rebecca Front and Gemma Chan.

“I Still Believe”: Based on a true story, Christian singer Jeremy Camp (Kia Apa) falls in love with a woman (Britt Robertson) who falls ill.

“The Jesus Rolls”: The “Big Lebowski” spinoff follows bowler Jesus Quintana (John Turturro).
“Lancaster Skies”: In 1944 Berlin, a British pilot (Kris Sadler) leads a bomber crew.

“The Lodge”: A woman (Riley Keough) faces escalating horrors after getting trapped in a blizzard with her boyfriend’s two children.

“Ordinary Love”: A longtime married couple (Liam Neeson and Lesley Manville) is forced to navigate the challenges of a brother’s cancer diagnosis.
“Ray Donovan: The Seventh Season”: The final season of the hit Showtime series about a Hollywood elite fixer (Liev Schreiber).

“Tigers Are Not Afraid”: A girl (Paola Lara) joins a street gang after losing her mother. In Spanish.

—Katie Foran-McHale/TNS



PHOTOS BY APPLE TV PLUS/AP

Chris Evans and Michelle Dockery star in “Defending Jacob,” an eight-part Apple TV Plus drama series adapted from a bestselling novel.

Guilt at the fore of ‘Defending Jacob’

Streaming miniseries explores how a son’s murder charge affects a family

By MARK KENNEDY
 Associated Press

Chris Evans’ latest TV project had a nice lure built in — he was able to stay close to his Boston-area home.

“I got to sleep in my own bed and see my family on the weekends. And it felt really, for a little while, like I had a regular 9-to-5 job,” the actor said. “That’s tough to beat.”

Evans stars in the eight-part Apple TV Plus drama series “Defending Jacob,” which is set in the Boston suburbs. The “Captain America” star got to lean into his natural accent and visit spots he knew growing up.

But there was one part that was inauthentic: He didn’t get to wear his own Red Sox cap during filming.

“I offered to use mine, but mine didn’t look as weathered. Mine was a bit new,” he said, laughing.

Evans stars as an assistant district attorney whose 14-year-old son is accused of killing a classmate. He investigates the crime, risking his career as his marriage is shaken, and both parents learn they really know little about the private life of their son.

The show raises questions about genetics, family secrets and trust.

“Hopefully it’s something that keeps you thinking well after it’s over,” Evans said.

British actress Michelle Dockery stars as the teen’s mother. The “Downton Abbey” veteran said she was attracted to the project because it explored a family’s dynamics under stress.

“What I loved about this story was it focuses far more on the effects that the crime has on the family as opposed to the crime itself,” she said. “The show is really about family and how far would you go for your loved one?”

The series also features Jaeden Martell



Jaeden Martell plays the son accused of killing a classmate in “Defending Jacob.”

as their son, Cherry Jones as a defense attorney, Pablo Schreiber as a prosecutor and J.K. Simmons as an estranged family member.

It marks Evans’ first return to episodic TV since his first professional job, the Fox summer 2000 show “Opposite Sex,” which he jokes was “canceled in the blink of an eye.”

He credits showrunner Mark Bombback and director Morten Tyldum with showing “meaningful contours and layers behind each character” and slowly ratcheting up the tension for what is ostensibly an eight-hour movie.

“I think 20 years ago this would’ve been a film, and it would have been all engine — you would have removed all opportuni-

“What I loved about this story was it focuses far more on the effects that the crime has on the family as opposed to the crime itself. The show is really about family and how far would you go for your loved one?”

Michelle Dockery
 Star of “Defending Jacob”

ties for the characters to breathe,” the actor said. “It would have been entertaining, but it really wouldn’t have gone too deep.”

“Defending Jacob” is adapted from the 2012 New York Times bestselling novel of the same name by William Landay. Evans said that at the heart of the legal thriller is something everyone can relate to — guilt.

“I enjoy the examination of guilt. That may be kind of revealing about my own personal nature, but I think there is some unique downstream manifestations from guilt. It’s this thing that I think a lot of people live with but cope with very differently,” he said. “I think that guilt never fully silences. That echo is always there. But I think he had kind of reached a certain level of peace. And then all of a sudden, all of this trauma had to be exhumed in a very public format.”

Shooting around Boston was a comfort to Evans, but Dockery said she also fell in love with the area, especially Walden Pond, which she calls “one of the most beautiful places I’ve ever been to.” Her dad is Irish and she said there’s “something about that Irish vibe in Boston that I really love.”

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

The time to walk is now

Less strenuous form of exercise is still a viable option for men (and women) of all ages

By ANDREW REINER

Special to The Washington Post

For 24 years, jogging was my main form of exercise. So it was frustrating and disheartening — a bit demoralizing, too — when I had to switch to walking 12 years ago because of a slow, painful recovery from a nasty bout of peritonitis, an infection in the lining of my stomach.

Like many young men in our fast-paced culture that values infallibility, I considered walking not real exercise, and a submission to vulnerability. Once my body healed enough, I returned to jogging and didn't look back.

During research for a book about what boys and men need to thrive and survive in a time when many of them are in crisis, I heard scores of men under 50 say they would never walk for exercise. Their reasoning: its reputation as a "softer" form of exercise embraced particularly by women and older men; it paled in comparison to weights and strength training; and it was a slow, boring movement that required too much time.

These attitudes explain the chasm in gyms where you'll find far more women on treadmills and elliptical machines, while the vast majority of guys are grunting on free weights and resistance machines. If these younger guys use treadmills, they're using them just to run a quick mile.

Matthew Harber, director of the Clinical Exercise Physiology Laboratory at Ball State University in Indiana, said that for men who grew up playing organized sports it's possible they "associate 'exercise' with competition." This can create a mindset that values only "high-intensity exercise ... (that) has a competitive angle to it. Perhaps it's akin to the 'no pain no gain' adage that is not true," he wrote in an email.

Carol Ewing Garber, past president of the American College of Sports Medicine and the program director of the graduate program in applied physiology at the Teachers College at Columbia University, said in an email that for many boys and younger men, the "gym scene" may fit with their perceptions of what "masculine" exercise should look like, especially when it comes to intense sweating.

"After all, we don't see media images of men going for walks ... we just don't see a lot of men in our daily life who walk and are portrayed as 'masculine,'" she said. "While there is no doubt that walking is a healthful activity for both men and women, walking may be seen as something only for women or older men."

Michael Heisler, 56, agrees. The part-time tennis teaching professional prefers weightlifting, strengthening exercises in the gym and "getting my cardio on the court." Like many men, he would rather

not exercise at all than resort to walking.

"The idea of walking feels like I'm throwing in the towel," he said.

While studies have shown that weightlifting, and resistance and core training, burn fat and provide cardiovascular benefits, research likewise has shown that walking can be a perfect whole-body exercise: a lower-impact workout with far fewer hazards. It can be done anywhere, anytime and with no expenditure of money.

While it may not be as cardio-strenuous as, say swimming or jogging, it has been shown to yield the long-term physical, mental and emotional health benefits men (and women) need throughout their lives. Studies also have found that regular walking was associated with a lower risk of stroke, of cognitive impairment and of cardiovascular disease.

Once middle age and its vicissitudes (back injuries, shoulder bursitis, ankle strains) start to hit, a gentler form of exercise starts to look more appealing. At least that is what happened to me.

Although I returned to running after my recovery from peritonitis, one unexpected outcome during that slower-paced year stuck with me: With every step I took during those plodding walks, a strange gravity drifted down through my legs, my feet and into the sidewalk. It made me feel more connected, more grounded, at a time when I was all too eager to disconnect from my compromised body.

And so two years ago, after I developed what doctors think is mild asthma or exercise-induced bronchoconstriction, I mostly gave up jogging and began walking every day for exercise. Now squarely in middle age, I don't feel the need to prove anything to anyone — or myself — and the slower speed lets me sink into my thoughts and my body at a time of life when I want to embrace and integrate both.

I also embrace walking these days because it feels, well, fitting in these frantic, fraught times. As a blog post for the Anxiety and Depression Association of America puts it: "Psychologists studying how exercise relieves anxiety and depression suggest that a 10-minute walk may be just as good as a 45-minute workout."

If this terrifying, historic moment has done anything positive, it has forced us to slow down, to be more present, more aware.

I walk now not just to get good exercise, but to feel that connection to my breath, my feet and to the earth.



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WEEKEND: FAMILY

What's on the tube?

Tired of 'Frozen 2'? Try these unconventional movie suggestions

BY JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Weeks of quarantine with kids have a way of burning through a movie collection.

Even with the libraries of streaming services like Netflix, Amazon, Disney Plus and others, there are plenty of households that have already had their fill of "Frozen 2" and overdosed on "Onward." In the best of times, the canon for kids movies can feel limiting. Disney overwhelms.

But there's a wider world of movies out there for young ones. We'll assume they've already accrued a solid foundation of some of the essentials: "Fantastic Mr. Fox," "The Iron Giant," Pixar, the Muppets, et cetera. So here are a few slightly further afield options — all available to stream, rent or free — that your kids might not have seen.

■ **"Fly Away Home":** The outlines of this 1996 film, with Anna Paquin and Jeff Daniels, suggest a familiar and schmaltzy kind of family movie, but it's handled with such grace that it rises above the ordinary. Also, the geese are really great. A 13-year-old (Paquin) moves in with her estranged father (Daniels) in rural Canada after the death of her mother. She adopts an abandoned nest of goose eggs, raises them and teaches them to fly South for the winter. Available to stream on the Criterion Channel. The director, Carroll Ballard, and the cinematographer, Caleb Deschanel, also crafted a movie of pastoral beauty and sweet child-anim camaraderie in 1979's "Black Stallion," which is streaming on Amazon Prime.

■ **"Lupin the Third: The Castle of Cagliostro":** For streaming Studio Ghibli films, we'll have to wait until they collectively hit HBO Max when it launches May 27. (They are available outside the U.S. on Netflix.) They are so good — among the most wondrous in cinema — you might just go ahead and buy copies of "My Neighbor Totoro," "Spirited Away" and "Princess Mononoke." But for now, you can stream the feature-film directing debut of Hayao Miyazaki, the animation master and co-founder of Ghibli. "The Castle of Cagliostro," on Netflix, isn't as well-known as Miyazaki's best. But the director's verve and imagination is already on display in this, a caper that continues the exploits of the debonair thief Arsene Lupin. Here, Lupin discovers that the loot from a casino heist is counterfeit.

■ **Buster Keaton:** No child raised on Buster Keaton can turn out bad. It's just a fact. Most children, even very young, recognize, and laugh their heads off at, his genius. Keaton's features are widely available, but many of his equally brilliant shorts can be streamed for free. Among them, "One Week," in which he tries to assemble a house; "The Goat," wherein Keaton is mistaken for a murderer; and "Cops," in which he angers the entire Los Angeles police force.

■ **"Stop Making Sense":** Concert films are an underutilized source



Kids can appreciate Buster Keaton, the sad-faced comedian, shown in Los Angeles in 1955.

of entertainment for kids. Jonathan Demme's glorious Talking Heads documentary, available for digital rental and to stream for free via Vudu, is a good place to start. And since David Byrne slowly assimilates his band — beginning with himself, an acoustic guitar and a tape deck, on "Psycho Killer" — "Stop Making Sense" offers a good step-by-step education on how to build a post-modern film extravaganza. Plus tips on wearing big suits and dancing with floor lamps. (See also: "A Hard Day's Night," on Criterion Channel, and "The Last Waltz" on Amazon Prime.)

■ **"The Three Caballeros":** There are forgotten Disney treasures, too, including this trippy 1944 gem streaming on Disney Plus. On his birthday, Donald Duck receives a package from his friends in Central and South America. Inside are film reels that bring a handful of individual tales and travelogues that Donald leaps into, too. It's a loving if overly exotic celebration of South America with some fabulous and surreal moments that blend animation and live action. The movie was produced as part of the wartime "Good Neighbor" policy to bring the Americas together and ward off any appeals from Axis powers. All of which is to say: "The Three Caballeros" isn't your average Disney movie.



From left, John Lennon, Ringo Starr, Paul McCartney and George Harrison of the Beatles arrive in Liverpool in 1964 for the premiere of "A Hard Day's Night."



"Apollo 11" doesn't need a lot of extra bells and whistles to convey the thrill of the moon landing.

■ **"Apollo 11":** This hit 2019 documentary, on Hulu, simply follows the moon mission from launch to rescue, without talking heads and with large amounts of previously unseen IMAX footage. It's a propulsive time capsule, one that the intervening 50 years has made only more stupendous. "Apollo 11," like the archival "For All Mankind," captures the all-ages thrill and glory of the moon landing.

■ **"Pirates! Band of Misfits":** Aardman Animations has been reliably churning out delights, from "Wallace and Gromit" to "Shaun the Sheep," for decades. "Pirates! Band of Misfits" (2012) came and went somewhat quietly and didn't spawn a franchise. But the Aardman charm is there on the high seas, too. Streaming on Hulu.

■ **"Boy?":** Taika Waititi does kids better than any working filmmaker today. Well before his Oscar-nominated "Jojo Rabbit," Waititi was making comic and big-hearted films about childhood, including his Oscar-nominated short, "Two Cars, One Night," and this semi-autobiographical sophomoric feature, inspired by that short. James Rolleston stars as an 11-year-old Maori boy and Michael Jackson fan whose dimwitted ex-convict father (a mulleted Waititi) returns home. Available on the free, public library streaming service Kanopy.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinar



College talk: Not just where you go, but how

Traditionally, May 1 is National Decision Day for high school seniors picking colleges. COVID-19 has delayed some universities' schedules; however, parents will inevitably begin engaging in vaguely competitive "college talk." Beware: These seemingly innocent conversation starters are an invitation into a quagmire of double entendre.

Parent #1: "What college will your son/daughter attend in the fall?"

Parent #2: "He/She will attend XYZ University."

Parent #1: "Oh, that's swell."

Hidden beneath this simple exchange is an underground strata of complex connotations and secret intent. How do I know this? Each of our three children experienced the college pick process between 2014 and 2018. I logged thousands of miles in our minivan to visit schools, go on tours, stay in lousy hotels and eat complimentary cookies. Between the three kids, they took dozens of entrance exams, completed 28 applications, wrote countless essay revisions and chewed scores of fingernails while waiting on acceptance letters.

After the decisions were made, we were expected to report the news to our friends. For most of 2014 to 2018, we lived on base, and many of our friends were empty nesters about to retire from active-duty service like us. There is much to be learned by observing this unique breed of parent.

They don't collect twigs, preen their feathers or engage in elaborate mating rituals. But empty nesters have been there, done that" when it comes to parenting. Interacting with these seasoned veterans around backyard fire pits and at the dog park taught me that those college pick talks are not what they seem.

I learned the hard way that, when people ask, "What college did Little Suzie decide on?" they really want to know, "Did she get any rejection letters?" Into Old Ivy, it was answer, "She's going to State," they are tabulating all prior conversations in an attempt to figure out the schools that gave Suzie the stiff-arm.

In order to diffuse their natural curiosity, it's best to be frank. Tell them which schools declined to accept your child's application. Do not be tempted to add, "We're actually happy that Little Johnny didn't get into Old Ivy, it just wasn't the right fit for him." The listener will only hear, "Little Johnny's 'Ds' in Chemistry came back to bite him, and besides, those Ivy leaguers are stuck up anyway."

Although it is considered gauche for civilian friends to discuss money matters, talking about personal finances is quite common in the military community. Thanks to college defined by grades, we military folks know each other's pay grades. As soon as they find out that your child's college costs \$0 grand a year, they'll wonder how you're paying for it because they know your salary.

You may wish to remain silent, and let them speculate that your child was offered a scholarship for some hidden talent like didgeridoo or curling. In a vacuum of information, your friends might think that you've got some long-lost rich uncle who graciously gave you a trust fund, but this might be hard to believe if you drive a used minivan and buy buns from the day old rack at the commissary.

Unless you tell your friends up front that you are paying for college with the GI Bill, loans, your Thrift Savings Plans or your 529 plans, they'll think that you're planning to take the night shift at the local 7-Eleven and move the furniture into a cardboard box over a heating grate in order to afford the tuition bills.

As long as you deliver the news of your child's decision without pretense, you will be met with understanding. Honesty is clearly the best policy to stop wondering minds from wandering to the absurd.

Our children? Hayden went to Rensselaer Polytechnic; weeded the GI bill out of the equation and went to Syracuse University on a decent financial aid package. And Lilly spent a year at Hobart before transferring to more affordable University of Rhode Island. All three kids took \$5,000 annual federal loans to help us afford tuition bills.

And yes, it was really swell.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinar's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
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FACES

Andrews launches 'Julie's Library' podcast

First 6 episodes from 'Mary Poppins' star to be released months ahead of schedule

By MARY McNAMARA
Los Angeles Times

Somewhere in Suffolk County, N.Y., perhaps right at this moment, a woman is holed up in a closet, surrounded by pillows, blankets and towels, and she's reading a story from a picture book.

A story that might go something like this:

Once upon a time, in a green and pleasant land far, far away, there lived a little girl who liked to sing. She traveled around the country with her mother and stepfather, and they sang for all sorts of people — soldiers and lorry drivers and shopkeepers; housemaids and homemakers and, on one very special occasion, the king himself.

As the girl grew, so did her voice, and by the time she was a woman, people from all over the world would stop whatever they were doing just to hear her sing. And when she grew older and no longer sang as often as she once did, the people were just as happy to hear her talk. Because her voice was a magical voice, still full of music and hope — so no matter how sad or scared or angry you might be, the sound of that voice would make you feel better.

And that is why Julie Andrews has been spending much of the COVID-19 shutdown stuffing herself into a pillow-soundproofed closet reading stories to that her new American Public Media podcast, "Julie's Library," could premiere April 29, months earlier than originally planned. The first six episodes, which drop weekly, will, she hopes, offer some aid to all those families sheltering in place like her.

"We want to reach the children," she says. "And their parents, and their grandparents and anyone who reads with them." "Mom and I are both fans of podcasts, and we had been planning to do one for quite some time," says Emma Walton Hamilton, Andrews' eldest daughter and longtime cowriter-collaborator. "It's a lovely extension of what we've already been doing with our own children's books and children's programming. And because of the virus, American Public Media was kind enough to fast-track the podcast. It's kept us very busy."

"Very busy," says Andrews, laughing. "And it's been quite a learning curve."

Andrews was supposed to be in Los An-

geles this past weekend, accepting AFI's Life Achievement award and appearing at several events, but all of those dates have been postponed due to coronavirus concerns — and so Andrews, along with a large portion of the world, is now working from home.

Mother and daughter are speaking on a conference call from their homes in Sag Harbor. They live, Andrews says, about five minutes away from each other but have been sheltering separately with occasional outdoor, socially distanced and masked visits in Andrews' backyard.

"It's amazing how much you can make work if you really apply yourself to it," Andrews says, sounding very much like the characters — Mary Poppins, Maria von Trapp and later "The Princess Diaries" Queen Clarisse — that made many people, including Rosie O'Donnell and, well, me, wish at times that she were our mother.

Making it work has been a theme of Andrews' life from her early years as a child star supporting her family through her long and varied journey as a singer, actor, writer, wife and mother. Her second memoir, released last year, is called "Home Work" for a reason. Most recently, she has voiced characters in "Aquaman" and the "Despicable Me" franchise.

She and Hamilton have written a series of children's books, some of which will be featured on "Julie's Library." The two had begun working on the podcast at a nearby recording studio when the coronavirus shut everything down. When Andrews agreed to continue recording in her home, American Public Media sent over the necessary equipment.

"I never thought that at my age, I'd get to be a whiz at all this stuff," Andrews says, laughing, "thanks to my sweet grandson, Sam, who is a whiz. He comes over with his gloves and mask on and hooks it all up and we record away."

When it turned out that Andrews' office was not ideal for sound purposes, Sam jury-rigged a solution. "He built me a recording studio in one of my closets, shoved a table and chair in there and covered me with throws and blankets and towels."

Says Hamilton, "It's like a pillow fort." Logistics were not the only learning curve Andrews faced. Although she has performed onstage, on-screen, on television and in the recording studio, reading

feature. Jury members included Danny Boyle, William Hurt and Demian Bichir.

Shira Haas, of the series "Unorthodox," picked up best actress for the Israeli mother-daughter drama "Asia."

"Asia," from director Ruthy Priber, also won the Nora Ephron Award, from a jury that included Gina Rodriguez, Regina Hall and Lizzy Caplan.

Harrison Ford piloting plane that wrongly crosses runway

Harrison Ford was piloting a plane that wrongly crossed a runway where another plane was landing, and federal authorities are investigating, officials and a representative for the actor said Wednesday.

Ford was at the controls of a small plane



CHRIS CARLSON/AP

Actress and singer Julie Andrews poses in 2007 in Los Angeles. Andrews launched a new podcast, "Julie's Library," on April 29, months ahead of schedule.

picture books via podcast, well, that was a new one.

"It's a very interesting process," she says. "I'm used to also being seen. But to just do a voice that is intimate and friendly, and trying to judge if what one is doing is achieving that — it's a whole different technique that I'm learning. Somehow, because it's for children, and knowing that they could be listening anywhere, you want to engage them, to be accessible."

"It requires a kind of intimacy," adds

Hamilton, "being right in someone's ear."

As for the AFI Life Achievement award, well, she is honored and was very much looking forward to seeing everyone, but she is confident things will get better soon and will happily fly to Los Angeles whenever the ceremony can take place.

"Meanwhile," she says, "it gives me more time to find the right gown."

Whether, like Fraulein Maria, she is eyeing her bedroom curtains as she says this is anyone's guess.

Netflix's 'The Half of It' wins Tribeca Film Festival honor

From wire reports

Alice Wu's "The Half of It," a teenage spin on Cyrano de Bergerac, has won the top award from the Tribeca Film Festival.

Organizers announced winners Wednesday for the festival, which had been set to take place from April 15 through April 26 in New York City. The coronavirus pandemic forced the festival to reschedule, but jury members were able to view the films electronically and vote on winners.

Best documentary feature went to Bo McGuire's "Socks on Fire," which McGuire describes as a "transgenerational docudrama couched in the battle royal for my Nanny's throne."

In the international competition, the Polish film "The Hater" from director Jan Komasa, was selected as the best narrative

Friday at Hawthorne Airport in the Los Angeles area when, according to a statement released by Ford's publicist, he crossed the runway after mishearing an instruction from air traffic control.

Without naming Ford, the Federal Aviation Administration said in its own statement that a two-seat Aviat Husky plane crossed the runway while another aircraft was performing a touch-and-go landing.

LeBron James to honor Class of 2020 with all-star event

LeBron James is putting together an all-star event to honor and celebrate the high school class of 2020, which has had its graduation season upended by the coronavirus pandemic.

The LeBron James Family Foundation, QX Institute and The Entertainment Industry Foundation on Wednesday announced that the one-hour special, "Graduate Together: America Honors the High School Class of 2020" will air simultaneously on NBC, ABC, CBS and Fox on May 16 at 8 p.m. EDT. The event will pay tribute to high schoolers graduating this year and will include appearances by James, Pharrell Williams, Malala Yousafzai, the Jonas Brothers, Bad Bunny, Yara Shahidi, Ben Platt, Laina Waithe and H.E.R.

"Graduate Together" was curated by students, educators and the American Federation of Teachers. It will feature commencement speeches, performances and more. It will also air on TikTok, Facebook, YouTube and other digital platforms.

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OPINION

Does the name on the check help win votes?

BY VIRGINIA OLIVEROS,
REBECCA WEITZ-SHAPIO
AND MATTHEW S. WINTERS
Special to The Washington Post

This April, instead of submitting tax returns to the Internal Revenue Service as usual, many Americans were waiting for the IRS to send them cash payments as part of a coronavirus relief package. On April 14, The Washington Post broke the news that the U.S. Treasury Department had made an "unprecedented" decision that stimulus checks sent via postal mail would carry the words "President Donald J. Trump" printed on the memo line — the first time in U.S. history a president's name appeared on an IRS check.

House and Senate Democrats objected; some reporting suggested adding the president's name might delay the checks.

Trump's tactic of literally putting his name on a government benefit was familiar to many observers of lower- and middle-income demographics. Social scientists have studied the many ways in which politicians in these countries routinely try to personalize government programs, funds and benefits.

■ Politicians around the world regularly try to put their names on government benefits.

In the U.S., we are used to seeing mayors' and governors' names on welcome signs on highways and at airports, and on commemorative plaques in places like parks. Elsewhere, some politicians place their names directly on government benefits that run from the small to the substantial.

In Argentina in 2001, a governor distributed 800,000 pairs of children's shoes with his name printed on the tongue; more recently, a mayor put her name on the city's 40 new police cars. In India, political scientists Adam Auerbach and Tariq

Thachil found city politicians tag local public goods with their names — like water tanks located at busy intersections — to claim credit for delivering them and thus win more votes. In Mexico, controversy erupted when a mayor in the state of Hidalgo tried to name a street in the town for himself. And in Bolivia earlier this year, a governor's signature appeared on checks his state distributed through a small-business loan program.

Presumably, these politicians, including Trump, want to see their names on government benefits and services in part because they believe that will help them at the ballot box. Are they right?

■ Do they win votes by claiming credit for these policies?

While no one has directly studied the effects of politicians literally putting their names on government benefits, scholarship does find evidence that politicians win votes when they claim credit for policies — even if they're not actually responsible for those projects. For example, political scientists Carlos Cruz and Christina Schneider show mayors in the Philippines try to link themselves to World Bank-funded infrastructure projects. These projects are distributed according to a formula.

Nevertheless, mayors of cities that receive such projects are more likely to be reelected than mayors of cities that just missed the cutoff for receiving these projects. Similarly, economists Raymond Gutierrez and Mushfiq Mobarak find Bangladeshi politicians visit NGO-funded programs to try to claim credit for them. They also find citizens reward politicians for these programs — even when the projects were randomly assigned rather than obtained through the mayor's initiative.

■ Personalizing policies can set off a voracious appetite for more.

On the other hand, voters may punish politicians who personally label govern-

ment benefits.

Consider studies of "clientelism" — a practice in which politicians or parties offer goods and favors in exchange for electoral support — in Argentina and Eastern Europe. Some citizens disapprove of such transactions and will vote against politicians who engage in them. Similarly, citizens may view efforts to personally name programs and policies as a signal that politicians are focused on improving their reelection chances, rather than governing effectively. That's especially true for citizens who do not benefit directly from the policies.

While politicians might benefit from claiming credit they didn't earn, accurate information can diminish their political gains. In the Bangladesh study described above, when researchers told constituents taking the survey that the NGO programs had actually been randomly assigned, the newly informed citizens stopped crediting local politicians. If Democrats are eager to claim credit for the stimulus package, they may wish to clarify that Congress passed the stimulus bill, which was paid for with taxpayers' money.

So will having Trump's name on the stimulus checks influence the election? Research from other countries suggests that will depend on whether voters react by giving Trump credit or by recoiling from his attempt to claim it. And that may depend on whether Trump or the Democrats are more successful in shaping the public narrative.

Virginia Oliveros is associate professor of political science at Tulane University and 2019-20 visiting fellow at the Kellogg Institute at the University of Notre Dame. Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro is associate professor of political science at Brown University and author of "Curb Your Clientelism in Argentina: Politics, Patronage and Social Policy." Matthew S. Winters is associate professor and associate head for graduate programs in the department of political science at the University of Illinois.

I'm rooting for Georgia, and you should be, too

BY HELAINE OLEN
Special to The Washington Post

Georgia recently began the slow process of reopening its economy, permitting people to dine in restaurants, get a haircut, go to the gym or, bizarrely, get a tattoo. Other states are set to join. Texas, for example, is also beginning the slow process of coming out of economic deep freeze on Friday.

Many infectious disease experts are agnostic, while a few are supporting the move. COVID-19, a disease unknown a mere six months ago, has taken the lives of more than 61,000 people in the United States and sickened at least a million more.

Yet it seems increasingly certain many of us will be in the same position as the residents of Georgia within the next few weeks or months.

Yes, people — by large majorities — tell pollsters they support the continued strict social distancing that has shut down huge swaths of the economy and tossed tens of millions of people into sudden unemployment. But the same polls often find limited patience for prolonging the restrictions. In one recent poll released last week by the Kaiser Family Foundation, about 1 in 6 said they had no more than a month of strict social distancing left in them. The largest share (37%) said three months from the day they were questioned was the limit. The shutdowns are increasingly difficult — economically, emotionally and logistically.

We want to shelter in place, but as the weather has gotten warmer, people are less likely to stay home. Almost a quarter of Americans visited with family or friends last week, up from 1 in 5 the week before, according to a poll conducted by Axios and Ipsos. This past weekend, beaches in Southern California and parks in New York City were set to join with people more than less than six feet apart. "Quarantine fatigue," researcher Lei Zhang told NBC, describing a fall-off in social distancing efforts observed via cellphone data.

It's easy to scold, but we are also social animals. People are people. Combine our abrupt isolation with sudden economic fears and life-or-death health worries, and you've got a petri dish of misery.

Parents are struggling with both child care and ludicrously inadequate online classes. Work-life balance, for those lucky enough to be able to work at home, is all but defunct. Internet network provider NordVPN, America's lucky enough to still have jobs and ones that likely permit them to work at home, are putting in three more hours a day. (I don't doubt it. I wrote this sentence at 11:44 p.m.) People are desperate to blow off steam.

Unemployment, at a decades low earlier this year, now sits at record highs in the other direction. And job loss is a very bad thing. Work doesn't just support us economically, it gives our lives meaning, too. Long-term unemployment — that is, unemployment lasting longer than six months — leads to lifelong lower earnings and a higher risk of being associated with increases in drug use, child neglect, depres-

sion and suicide. For a child, if a parent is unemployed for a lengthy period of time, often means poorer long-term educational outcomes.

So alcohol sales are soaring. In hard-hit New York City, domestic violence-related murders are significantly above the numbers at this time last year. (There was another one earlier this week in nearby Jersey City, N.J. A pregnant restaurant owner was murdered by her partner who went on to commit suicide.) Calls to suicide and mental health hotlines have increased by multiples.

It seems almost certain that pressure to reopen will grow. But it's likely that the perfect world, the one where we can reopen with full confidence that we will all be safe, will not exist — at least not within the time frame that we need. Thanks to President Donald Trump, we are leagues behind on where we need to be to responsibly begin the process. We still lack anything resembling an adequate number of diagnostic tests or protective masks. Individual state efforts cannot fully compensate for a failed federal response.

We will all be certainly know within a few weeks whether Georgia was simply a New York City waiting to happen — or if by luck of geography, lack of density or simple timing, it is leading the way to get back to normal life. But make no mistake: Soon we will all need to take Georgia's potentially fatal gamble.

Helaine Olen is a contributor to Post Opinions and the author of "Pound Foolish: Exposing the Dark Side of the Personal Finance Industry."

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

When picking running mate, Biden can avoid others' errors

With the Democratic presidential nomination within his grasp, former Vice President Joe Biden must make a decision that presidential candidates always insist that they take seriously but often don't: the selection of a running mate. Biden says he will soon announce members of a committee to screen potential candidates for that role.

We already know one thing about Biden's choice: It will be a woman. That commitment still leaves Biden with an array of qualified potential partners, but, like every presidential candidate, he will be exhorted to choose an attorney over the one that should be uppermost in his mind: whether his pick would be qualified to assume the presidency at a moment's notice and whether in that event she could continue the policies he championed.

Some will urge Biden to make a choice that would represent a dramatic change to his defeated rival Bernie Sanders and Sanders' passionate, often young, supporters. Others will advocate that he choose a running mate who would be likely to deliver voters in her home state, especially if it's one that President Donald Trump carried over four years ago.

Biden will also be urged to seek ethnic or racial balance, for example by naming an African American running mate who could energize a loyal Democratic constituency. One such potential choice, former Georgia gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams, has disdained false modesty by saying that she would be an "excellent running mate" for the former vice president.

Biden himself has floated an additional factor: skills or experience that would complement his strengths and compensate for his weaknesses. According to Biden, that approach was recommended to him by former President Barack Obama.

We believe, however, that Biden's primary criteria for a running mate should be ability and compatibility.

We would urge any prospective presidential nominee to set these priorities, but it's especially important for Biden to do so. Although in good health, if elected he would be 78 when he was inaugurated for what very likely would be a single term. (Biden has not committed to serve only four years, yet he reportedly indicated to aides that he probably wouldn't seek reelection.) If he instead were to serve two terms, the president would be a favorite for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2024.

But Biden's age isn't the only reason for him to choose carefully. When presidential candidates have allowed other criteria to drive the selection of a running mate, the results often have been unfortunate, even disastrous. It was the result of a state-of-the-art pandering populist politics that was alien to McCain's appreciation of the responsibilities of government.

The Palin fiasco is a reminder of what happens when novelty or "excitement" becomes the primary factor in selecting a running mate. It can result in less dramatic examples of mismatches, including then-



TED S. WARREN/AP

Dr. Gabrielle Beger prepares to take a nose-swab sample from Lawrence McGee, as she works with a team of University of Washington medical providers conducting testing for the novel coronavirus at Queen Anne Healthcare, a skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility in Seattle, on April 17.

Vice President Walter Mondale's selection of the obscure Rep. Geraldine Ferraro in 1984 — an early exercise in gender balance that saddled the campaign with unwelcome controversy — or George H.W. Bush's selection four years later of the youthful (and more conservative) Sen. Dan Quayle of Indiana, who proved himself in office to be "no Jack Kennedy."

Nor is it clear that an ideologically or geographically "balanced ticket" is a recipe for victory. Some believe that John F. Kennedy secured a crucial victory in Texas and other Southern states in 1960 by asking Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson to be his running mate. (Johnson later said Kennedy himself held that view.) But Kennedy's victory in those states also reflected the lingering dominance of the Democratic Party in that region. Among the conflicting accounts of why Reagan chose George H.W. Bush, a defeated opponent, as his running mate in 1980 is that the more moderate Bush provided ideological balance for the conservative Reagan. But Reagan's overwhelming victory over unpopular incumbent Jimmy Carter undermines the notion that Reagan's choice of a running mate made much difference.

Indeed, research suggests that, whether they are chosen because of gender, geography or ideology, vice presidential candidates probably don't exert significant influence over most voters' choice for president, though voters may lose confidence in a presidential candidate who chooses a running mate perceived as incompetent. Even the popular notion that vice presidential candidates will carry their home states for the ticket has been questioned, although a recent study suggests there might be such an advantage.

We're not suggesting that Biden should totally ignore other factors in making his selection, including personal chemistry, party unity and the possibility that a particular candidate might make the difference in the outcome in a particular state or region. But these should be secondary considerations. Fortunately, the Democratic Party includes many officeholders with the right amounts of experience and demonstrated expertise, including some of Biden's primary campaign rivals, who potentially would be productive partners for a President Biden.

When Biden decided that he would ask Biden to be his running mate, Obama described the longtime Delaware senator as "a statesman with sound judgment who doesn't have to hide behind bluster to keep America strong." Substitute "stateswoman" for "statesman" and that is the job description that should guide Biden in making this momentous decision.

Government's abdication has left nursing homes flying blind

More than a fifth of the 55,000 known COVID-19 deaths in the United States have occurred at nursing homes and other elder-care facilities. Federal and state governments have largely turned a blind eye, often making no effort to test residents or staffs and leaving relatives, surrounding communities and the public in the dark.

Many at least a half-dozen states — most notably Virginia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Texas and Louisiana — officials have refused to make public the names of facilities wracked by the virus, even as residents and employees there are dying. The states' nominal reason for their secrecy, privacy protections for institutions, is akin to refusing to identify an airline whose plane has crashed.

With few exceptions, states and the federal government have made little or no effort to verify the disease's death toll at nursing homes and similar facilities, conservatively estimated at 11,000 in a tally by The Associated Press.

The effects of government negligence and lack of transparency are incalculable but profound: families uncertain whether to place their elderly loved ones in a nursing home or remove them from one. Hospitals blithely transferring fragile patients to homes overwhelmed by unannounced outbreaks of the pandemic. Homes with no means to provide testing left to guess at a diagnosis when residents or staff succumb.

A survey by The Post found that almost a tenth of the nation's 15,000 nursing homes have publicly reported that residents or staff have tested positive for the virus. But the available data are staggeringly incomplete — as in New York, by far the country's hardest-hit state, where officials have released the names only of homes where at least five people have died.

Many nursing homes have made good-faith efforts to keep relatives informed when outbreaks occur; others have not or simply don't know. The federal government recently mandated that residents and relatives — but not the public — be alerted when an individual in a home has tested positive. Yet the order is all but meaningless. It tells residents to keep to which industry group estimates that just one-third of facilities have access. Just one governor, Republican Jim Justice of West Virginia, has ordered universal testing at every nursing home in the state.

Staffing shortages at elder-care facilities, widespread for years before the pandemic, have probably accelerated the

spread of infection as many employees hold down simultaneous jobs at two or more homes, thereby spreading it as they shuttle from one to another. And while some states, including Maryland, have ordered nursing home employees to wear personal protective equipment when they interact with residents, some facilities cannot find enough masks, gloves and gowns to comply.

The government's abdication has left most nursing homes flying blind in a pandemic that has made them uniquely vulnerable. The absence of transparency and data put not only the facilities but also the public in the crosshairs of the coronavirus.

Ruling means taxpayers still funding Obamacare's flaws

The Affordable Care Act has cost taxpayers a bundle, and now the Supreme Court says they are on the hook for billions of dollars in additional payments to insurers even though Congress never appropriated the money. The ruling will be even more expensive if it encourages more lawsuit demands for unappropriated funds from other states.

That's the meaning of Monday's 8-1 ruling upholding payments to health insurers for so-called risk corridors in Obamacare's first three years (Maine Community Health Options v. U.S.). Congress created the scheme to lure insurers to offer policies in the insurance exchanges, promising to make up for losses resulting from mispricing in the early going. Democrats claimed the program would pay for itself because the payments would come from other insurers that lost money.

They would be no, Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Many insurers tried to attract customers by offering cheap plans that lost money. Over three years the risk-corridor plan was \$12 billion in the hole. Meanwhile, Republicans won the House in 2010 and refused to appropriate the money to make up for those insurance losses.

They called it a "balloon" for insurance companies and attached the cost in spending bills that barred the Obama administration from making risk-corridor payments despite language in Obamacare saying the secretary of health and human services "shall pay" to insurers that lost money.

The insurers sued, and now comes the Supreme Court to say they are owed the money because Congress created an "implied" right of action in Obamacare. This is a slippery subject because the court has recently been reluctant to read implied rights of action into law unless Congress has been explicit. Justice Samuel Alito makes this good point in his lonely dissent, and you can bet other potential litigants will be scouring other laws for "shall pay" language to sue over.

Congress writes laws all the time that authorize payments for this or that purpose only to decide later to appropriate less money or none at all in any given year. The appropriation power controls in the end, and the Constitution says no money shall be spent unless Congress appropriates it. The executive has no power to spend money without congressional approval, as Democrats have been lecturing us about President Donald Trump's "emergency" spending for the Mexico border wall.

Let's hope the court is reading this as a narrow one-time exception to its implied rightfulness. As Chief Justice John Roberts well knows, Obamacare seems to invite legal exceptions and invented jurisprudence. Alito strikes us as having the stronger legal argument, but the majority doesn't agree and now taxpayers will pay for another Obamacare provision that had to pass before we found out what was really in it.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Officials: Woman shot after dispute over \$250

FL MELBOURNE — Dep-uties in Florida say a dispute over \$250 provoked a drive-by shooting that put one woman in a hospital and the other in jail.

An arrest report says Aquayia Osbourne, 20, argued with the victim over the money and then left the scene, saying she would be "right back." Osbourne then returned in the passenger seat of a car and allegedly fired six shots at her, Florida Today reported.

The Brevard Sheriff's Office said the victim was shot in the feet and hospitalized with non-life-threatening injuries. Osbourne was charged with attempted murder and violating probation.

Federally protected sea turtles begin nesting

GA BRUNSWICK — A protected sea turtle species in Georgia started their nesting season.

The first batch of eggs from a loggerhead, the common sea turtle along Georgia's coast named for its large head, was found Monday on Cumberland Island beach, the state's Department of Natural Resources said in a press release.

The eggs, which officials said were laid Saturday night, marked the 32nd year the state has experienced nesting by the federally protected species.

The department said people encountering sea turtles on the beach should maintain their distance and avoid using flashlights or flash photography so they don't disturb the nesting process.

Family was attacked by man with machete

NM LAS CRUCES — A New Mexican man is facing charges after authorities say he attacked a woman and her family with a machete.

The Las Cruces Sun-News reported Jachary Tanner Cadena was arrested last Friday in Las Cruces following a fight with the woman and her family.

According to Dona Ana County Sheriff's deputies, Cadena went to the woman's home because he believed they had some of his belongings.

Deputies say an argument started and the woman used a 27-inch machete against Cadena, who took it away. Authorities say Cadena then used it against her and her family.

No joke: Tupac needs unemployment benefits

KY FRANKFORT — It's no joke — Tupac Shakur lives in Kentucky and needs unemployment benefits to pay his bills.

The Lexington man's name was brought up by Gov. Andy Beshear on Monday night as he spoke about how the state is trying to process all unemployment claims filed in March amid the coronavirus pandemic by the end of April.



Tony Gutierrez/AP

Still a memorable birthday

Anna Camilo, 16, holds balloons and cake in a parking lot while her mother Sarah, right, and her friends sing "Happy Birthday" to her in Richardson, Texas, on Tuesday. Sarah said this was one way she could celebrate with friends while observing social distancing.

According to Beshear, a few "bad apples" including a person who filed an unemployment claim under the name of rapper Tupac Shakur — who was killed in a 1996 shooting — are responsible for slowing down the state's unemployment processing. He blamed people who "think they're funny" for making "thousands of other people wait" for their unemployment payments.

But the Lexington Herald-Leader reported that Tupac Malik Shakur, 46, who goes by Malik, lives in Lexington and worked as a cook before restrictions to stop the spread of the coronavirus shut down restaurants.

He filed for unemployment March 13 and has been waiting to receive his first check.

Beshear called Shakur personally on Tuesday to apologize and Shakur said he appreciated the gesture and forgave Beshear.

"I understand, he's dealing with a lot," Shakur said. "Mistakes happen."

Woman dies after officers use stun gun

MT BUTTE — A Montana woman has died after law enforcement officials shocked her with a stun gun in response to her threatening officers with a knife, Butte-Silver Bow County Sheriff Ed Lester said Tuesday.

Officers responded to a report of an agitated woman who was yelling and damaging an apartment Sunday night. The woman threatened to hurt officers with

THE CENSUS

\$236K

The approximate amount of money Oregon State Police found in a minivan after they pulled over its driver Monday. Drew Miller, 27, of Sioux Falls, S.D., was stopped by a sergeant on several traffic violations on Oregon 66 near Keno. The Oregonian/OregonLive reported. Police said the sergeant saw undescribed "signs of criminal activity" in the vehicle. A search ensued, and \$236,090 was found in vacuum-sealed bags. Miller was arrested on suspicion of several charges, including money laundering.

the knife, but later put it down.

As an officer attempted to enter the apartment, she picked the knife up and came toward the officer, who used his stun gun, Lester told The Montana Standard.

The woman was taken to the hospital, still in an agitated state, but she later lost consciousness and efforts to revive her were unsuccessful, Lester said.

2 swim for safety after ditching small plane

TX NEW BRAUNFELS — A pilot and his passenger swam to safety Tuesday after the two men made an emergency landing in their small plane in a Central Texas lake.

The ditching happened about 10 a.m. in Canyon Lake, about 35 miles northeast of San Antonio.

Witness Ed Sanford said he was showing his girlfriend his old lakefront neighborhood when he heard a sputtering engine as they saw the single-engine Cessna flying low. The plane disappeared below the tree line, then Sanford

heard the plane hit the water.

"I'm no pilot, but he did well. It looked like he was trying to avoid going into the neighborhood," Sanford told the New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung.

One of the men suffered non-life-threatening injuries. The other was uninjured. Robert Mike, Canyon Lake's assistant fire chief, said the aircraft sank into 15 feet to 18 feet of water.

'RIP Big Fella': Black bear killed by truck

MI WALKER — A black bear nicknamed Yogi was struck and killed Tuesday on a highway ramp in the Grand Rapids area, police said.

The bear, an adult male weighing roughly 250 pounds, had been spotted for a few years in Walker. He was hit by a large truck on a ramp leading to westbound Interstate 96.

"There were no injuries to the occupants of the vehicle. ... RIP Big Fella," Walker police said on Facebook.

The Department of Natural Resources set traps in two locations last year but couldn't catch and relocate Yogi.

"They're smart," said state wildlife biologist John Niewoonder.

He said the bear probably spent the winter in the Grand Rapids area and "just woke up again."

Man wins \$1M jackpot twice on same day

CO PUEBLO — With a little bit of luck and persistence, a Colorado man has hit the jackpot twice after playing the same numbers for 30 years.

Colorado Lottery officials identified "Joe B." as the winner of two \$1 million Powerball jackpots on March 25. He claimed the winnings last Friday, KUSA-TV reported.

The winning tickets were sold on Lake Avenue in Pueblo at two different stores, about a mile apart, officials said.

"Joe B." bought one ticket in the morning and the other in the evening, communications director Meghan Dougherty said.

The Colorado Lottery received approval earlier this month to process winning tickets worth \$10,000 or more at a touch-free, drive-thru claims office amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Winners must make an appointment to claim their prize, or do so through the mail.

From wire reports

Stripes SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market



Transportation

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Transportation

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Pearls Before Swine



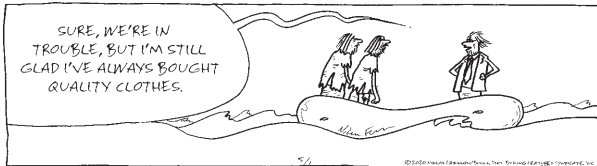
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



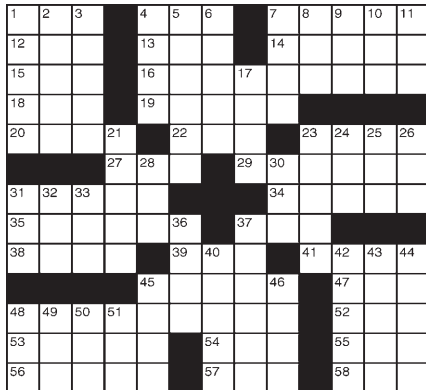
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 YMCA class
- 4 Prefix for "night" or "day"
- 7 Piles
- 12 Haw preceder
- 13 Nabokov novel
- 14 Concur
- 15 Actor McKellen
- 16 "Stormy Weather" singer
- 18 Before
- 19 Mexican snacks
- 20 Dog bane
- 22 Actor Cariou
- 23 Broadcasts
- 27 LPs' successors
- 29 Holiday quaff
- 31 Secret store
- 34 Suggest
- 35 One-celled creature
- 37 Prohibit
- 38 Perukes
- 39 Genetic letters
- 41 Guffaws
- 45 Surgery reminders
- 47 Decorate
- 48 Newbie
- 52 Mafia boss
- 53 Arcade pioneer
- 54 "Give — break!"
- 55 Roswell visitors

DOWN

- 56 Allude to
- 57 Gerund suffix
- 58 Fish eggs
- 1 Main
- 2 Oyster's prize
- 3 Soprano Fleming
- 4 Beer ingredient
- 5 Paragons
- 6 Do the tango
- 7 Scoffing laughs
- 8 Conceit
- 9 Schedule abbr.
- 10 Signing need
- 11 Observe
- 17 Top-of-the-line
- 21 Liniment targets
- 23 Ecstasy's opposite
- 24 — and outs
- 25 King, in Cannes
- 26 Pvt.'s superior
- 28 Society newbie
- 30 Transcript no.
- 31 Cornfield noise
- 32 Parisian pal
- 33 Gearwheel tooth
- 36 Eyebrow shape
- 37 Lacking
- 40 Campbell
- 42 Milk dispenser
- 43 Japanese city
- 44 Feel
- 45 Tizzy
- 46 Hose woe
- 48 Joke
- 49 Way to go (Abbr.)
- 50 "Mangial"
- 51 Epoch

Answer to Previous Puzzle



5-1

CRYPTOQUIP

KQOV DHMNSH NPTDHCNHPVI
KFWRC GH EHD L IWNVOGRH
VF OCC SWPTHPML VF NDNIQ
CNIQHI? TOHRNM MRFEHI.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: STREAMING SERVICE
FEATURING VIDEOS EXPLAINING HOW ONE
COULD TROUBLESHOOT WEB PROBLEMS:
NETFIX.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals R

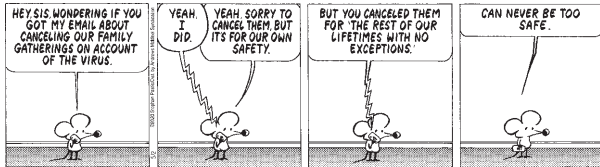
Frazz



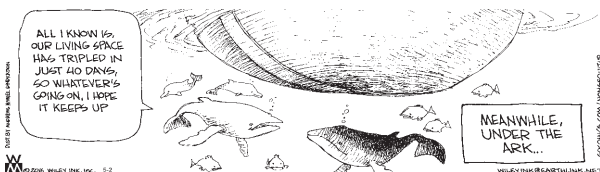
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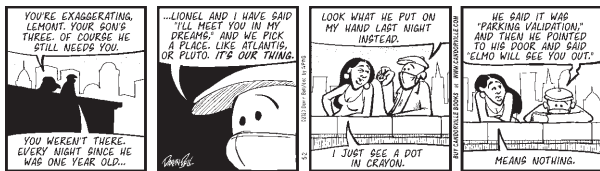
Pearls Before Swine



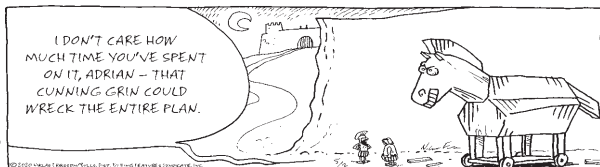
Non Sequitur



Candorville



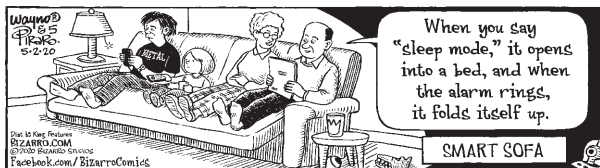
Carpe Diem



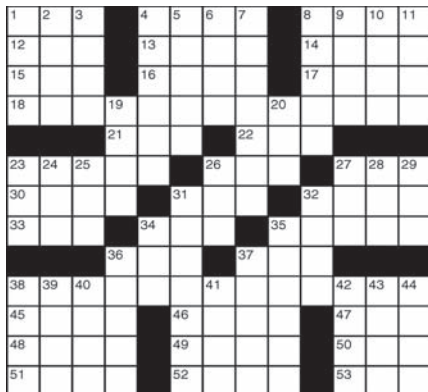
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Used a chair
- 4 Atkins diet no-no
- 8 Molt
- 12 "Gross!"
- 13 "Would — to you?"
- 14 Jeans maker
- 15 Arthur of "Maude"
- 16 Travel permit
- 17 Skip
- 18 "Let's Get Loud" singer who performed at the 2020 Super Bowl
- 21 Revue segment
- 22 Trendy
- 23 Outscores
- 26 Shack
- 27 — de mer
- 30 Bakery buys
- 31 Towboat
- 32 Indonesian island
- 33 Weep
- 34 Future flower
- 35 Razzle-dazzle
- 36 Feedbag bit
- 37 Pair
- 38 Former Yankee with 696 home runs
- 45 Creche trio
- 46 Cheer (for)
- 47 Monk's title
- 48 Goad
- 49 Sicilian peak
- 50 "Alley —"
- 51 RSVP enclosure

DOWN

- 52 Antelope's playmate
- 53 Snake's warning
- 24 Continent north of Afr.
- 25 Whatever
- 26 Paul Newman film
- 27 Avril follower
- 28 PC key
- 29 Actress Taylor
- 31 Instructed privately
- 32 Online journal
- 34 Rail
- 35 B.B. King's instrument
- 36 Rust, for one
- 37 Unmanned plane
- 38 Band boosters
- 39 News reporter
- 40 Swelled heads
- 41 Lavish affection (on)
- 42 Sci-fi fleet
- 43 Love god
- 44 Microwaves

Answer to Previous Puzzle



5-2

CRYPTOQUIP

X J G B O Q C T O Q E I U
G N C T E G N B N X I W Y J G I S N
H J X W I G T H I E J X J Y O Y O W I
M E G O I N W S E M : M O G Y J G
I S N H J G W O E G .

Yesterday's Cryptogram: WHAT RECIPE INGREDIENTS WOULD BE VERY SUITABLE TO ADD PUNGENCY TO IRISH DISHES? GAELIC CLOVES.
Today's Cryptogram Clue: Q equals L

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Deals

Wednesday's transactions

FOOTBALL

National Football League
BUFFALO BILLS — Signed DE Bryan Cox Jr. to a one-year contract.
CHICAGO BEARS — Signed free agent WR Trevor Davis.

DALLAS COWBOYS — Signed CB Daryl Worley to a one-year contract.

GREEN BAY PACKERS — Agreed to terms with undrafted free agents: LB's Krysta Barnes, Tita Galea and Delontae Scott; SS Henry Black and Frankie Griffin; T Travis Bruffy, CB's Marc-Antoine Beaubien, Stanford Samuels, and Will Sunderland, G Zack Johnson, FB Jordan Jones, DE Ben Adams, DT Wellington Previlon, WR Darrell Stewart and RB Patrick Taylor.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed undrafted free agents: K Rodrigo Blankenship, DT Kameron Cline, DE Keneale Coleman, TE Farrod Green, WR Demetrius Harris, T Calvin O'Donnell, CB Travis Reed, S Donald Rutledge, LB Brandon Wellington and DT Chris Williams.

MIAMI DOLPHINS — Signed undrafted free agents: WR's Matt Cole and Kirk Merritt, TE Jonathan Hubbard and Nick Kaltmayer, LB Kyian Johnson, DT's Benito Jones and Ray Lima, DE Tyshun Rendon, G Donell Stanley and TE Bryce Sterk.

NEW YORK GIANTS — Exercised the fifth-year option on TE Evan Engram and S Jabril Peppers.

TAMPA BAY BUCCANERS — Exercised the fifth-year option on TE D.J. Howard.

TEXAS TITANS — Signed WR's Johnson with G Zac Kacin on a one-year contract.

HOCKEY

National Hockey League
CALGARY FLAMES — Signed D Jonathan Gostkowski to a two-year contract.

DETROIT RED WINGS — Signed G Victor Soderstrom to a two-year contract.

COLLEGE

NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL — Announced C Nehemiah Kibeywa has transferred from College of Southern Indiana.

MISSOURI — Announced Alex Galloway has transferred from Southeast Missouri.

Golf

PGA schedule

The revised PGA Tour schedule for 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic:

Jan. 17-20 — Diamond Resorts Tournament of Champions (Sun-Hed 1)

Feb. 7-10 — ISPS Handa Vic Open (Celtic-Boulton)

Feb. 14-17 — ISPS Handa Women's Australian Open (Nelly Korda)

Feb. 21-24 — Honda PGA Thailand (Amy Yang)

Feb. 25-28 — Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational, Midland Cc, Midland, Mich.

July 22-25 — Marathon PGA Classic, Highland Meadows Gc, Sylvania, Ohio.

July 31-Aug. 2 — ShopRite PGA Classic, Shawnee Dolio Hotel (Bay Course), Galloway, N.J.

Aug. 3-6 — The Evian Championship, Evian Resort Gc, Evian-les-Bains, France.

Sept. 13-16 — Aberdeen Standard Insurance Ladies Scottish Open, The R&A, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Sept. 19-22 — KIA Classic, Avara Gc, Carlsbad, Calif.

Sept. 20-23 — AIG Women's British Open, Royal Troon, Troon, Scotland.

Sept. 28-30 — Walmart NW Arkansas Championship, Pinnacle Gc, Rogers, Ark.

Sept. 3-6 — CP Women's Open, Shaugnessy Golf and Cc, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Sept. 10-13 — ANA Inspiration, Mission Hills Cc, Rancho Mirage, Calif.

Sept. 14-17 — Cambia Portland Classic, Clatsop Golf and Cc, Portland, Ore.

Sept. 24-27 — Kia Classic, Avara Gc, Carlsbad, Calif.

Oct. 1-4 — Meijer PGA Classic, Blythe-ford Cc, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Oct. 8-11 — KPMG Women's PGA Championship, Colonial Cc, Newton Square, Pa.

Oct. 18-21 — Buick PGA Shanghai, Qizhong Garden Gc, Shanghai.

Oct. 22-25 — BMW Ladies Championship, PGA International Ruslan, Busan, South Korea.

Dec. 10-13 — U.S. Women's Open, Congressional, Bethesda, Md.

Dec. 17-20 — CME Group Tour Championship, Tiburón Gc, Naples, Fla.

Commentary

A kind of hush

Whenever and wherever the PGA Tour returns, it will be very quiet without fans

By DOUG FERGUSON

Associated Press

Rory McIlroy contemplated what golf would be like without fans. This was five days before there was no golf at all.

"I'd be OK with it," he said at the Arnold Palmer Invitational, unaware the new coronavirus was about to shut down golf for at least three months. "It would be just like having an early tee time on the PGA Tour."

And then he added with a laugh, "I guess for a few guys, it wouldn't be that much different."

McIlroy had one of those early times when he was a 20-year-old rookie on the PGA Tour. He teed off in the second round of the Honda Classic at 6:59 a.m.

So this will be going back in time for McIlroy, along with the rest of the sport.

The PGA Tour set a target of June 8-14 at Colonial in Texas to resume its schedule, with no fans for at least a month. Even if that doesn't prove to be the return event or date, golf will be without spectators whenever it starts.

Will it matter?

Low score still wins, no matter who's there to see it.

But it will be a new arena.

"I could play without fans, but I don't think I'd play as well," McIlroy said Tuesday on his Golf-Post podcast with Carson Daly and Stephen Curry. "Especially on a Sunday, bag nine, you feed off that energy. You hear roars on other parts of the golf course and you sort of know what's going on. All those dynamics are in play when you have people there."

The dynamics go beyond noise, of course.

Nathan Grube, the tournament director of the Travelers Championship in Connecticut, is preparing it to be the third tournament, the last weekend in June, if golf resumes on schedule. There is hope. There is excitement.

There are no grandstands being

erected.

That wouldn't be a big problem at the TPC River Highlands, which features a stadium design and allows for good viewing, especially over the closing holes.

But imagine other courses without stands, without hospitality suites, with nothing but green grass, white sand in the bunkers, the occasional water hazard.

Think about Mackenzie Hughes trying to play a cut into the 18th green at the Honda Classic, only to pull it into the middle of the bleachers. He was given a free drop. Years ago, the safe play on the 18th at Doral was to put it into the grandstands beyond the green to take water out of the equation, knowing there would be a free drop.

"They're not going to catch errant shots on some holes," said Mark Russell, a senior rules official on the PGA Tour.

They are temporary immovable obstructions, and they are a big part of modern golf.

'I could play without fans, but I don't think I'd play as well.'
Rory McIlroy

Winged Foot in 2006, to avoid taking too much time figuring out where to drop for shots into or behind the stands. In a few cases, it allowed for a player to advance his ball closer to the hole without hitting it.

Speaking of Winged Foot, consider that no fans on the course means the rough will remain just that. Phil Mickelson, as an example, has been known to hit tee shots so far off line that the ball comes to rest in an area where gallery traffic has trampled thick grass and led to a reasonable lie.



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Tiger Woods walks off the first green after making birdie during the third round of the 2012 AT&T National golf tournament at Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Md. Woods won the past two PGA Tour events when spectators were not allowed during at least one round of the tournament.

(Maybe if there were no fans at Winged Foot, he would have had to play toward the 18th fairway instead of hitting 3-iron, which led to double bogey and a runner-up finish in the 2006 U.S. Open.)

Fans were Arnold Palmer's best friends — literally, in so many cases, but also keeping some of his wild shots from straying too far off line.

Tiger Woods once came to the 18th hole at Bay Hill tied for the lead when he pulled his tee shot. It was headed out of bounds but instead struck one of the thousands of spectators in the neck. From grass that had been flattened by the gallery, he hit 5-iron to 15 feet and made birdie to beat Mickelson by one shot.

No gallery? It's happened before, most recently in Japan because of flooding. Before that, Congressional had no fans for the third round of the AT&T National because of trees downed by a wind storm. Woods, the biggest draw in

golf, won both tournaments.

Sound is underrated in golf, especially at scenic Augusta National. Woods spoke to studying every leaderboard so when he heard a roar, he would have a better idea of who did what.

Max Homa recalled his first PGA Tour victory, a year ago this week at the Wells Fargo Championship, and how electric it was walking up the 18th fairway.

The next tournament he plays will be different.

"It will be weird," Homa said Tuesday. "I imagine the first person to win, it probably will be the strangest of their lives. It sounds very selfish of us to not want to play in front of fans because it won't be electric. But people are craving sports, craving entertainment. I'd carry my bag in front of nobody if needed."

Without fans, without noise and excitement, it won't be the same.

But it will be golf. And for the time being, that will do.

Joshua's first title defense could be without fans

Associated Press

Anthony Joshua's first fight as the restored world heavyweight champion could take place in front of no spectators.

British boxing's governing body told promoters on Thursday it hopes to be able to have shows back from July after months of inactivity because of the coronavirus outbreak.

Initially, though, bouts are expected to be held without fans, meaning Joshua's fight against Kubrat Pulev — first since the Briton regained his WBA, IBF and WBO belts by beating Andy Ruiz Jr. in December — would surely be switched from its planned venue, the stadium of English soccer club Tottenham

which can hold more than 60,000 spectators.

The Joshua-Pulev fight had been scheduled for June 20 before being pushed back to an as-yet-unconfirmed date because of the pandemic. A rearranged date of July 25 has been touted.

Joshua wanted the first defense of his belts to take place in London.

Eddie Hearn, Joshua's promoter, said his Matchroom Boxing organization was planning to stage "two or three" Saturday fight nights in July before returning with a bigger show, provided boxing and other sports get the go-ahead to return from the British government.

Hearn said he wouldn't want to stage a fight

in an enclosed location like a TV studio because he doesn't see how it "does anything for the sport."

"I want to build a fight camp, a different kind of environment, more dramatic," Hearn said in an interview with the BBC. "It will look spectacular on TV. We need to dramatize it."

The British Boxing Board of Control said if boxing was to return in July, there would be an emphasis on "minimal numbers" of officials and broadcast personnel. Medical staff were required at ringside, too.

Anyone at the events will have to have been in pre-fight quarantine and had tests for COVID-19.

BEST SPORTS MOVIES

No. 10: 'A League of Their Own'

Croteau found kinship in film

Baseball pioneer was inspired

By PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

There were moments when Julie Croteau's baseball path was a lonely one even as she turned in a career historic enough that Cooperstown wanted her glove.

Little League with mostly boys. Suing her high school to take the field on the varsity team (she lost). Notoriety as one of the first female NCAA baseball players.

It wasn't until the smooth-fielding infielder made the roster as an extra in the Penny Marshall-directed movie "A League of Their Own" that she realized she wasn't so alone.

There may be no crying in baseball, but there certainly are trailblazers.

Croteau was introduced to the world of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, which was featured in the 1992 film starring Geena Davis, Madonna and Tom Hanks. The film was voted No. 10 in The Associated Press Top 25 favorite sports movies poll.

"To see their part of history come alive in this movie, it truly was a gift," said the 49-year-old Croteau, who's now the director of communications for wellness programs at Stanford University. "To know that I wasn't alone. Because I felt like I was alone."

Croteau was 20 when she

Editor's note: Last week, the Associated Press revealed its Top 25 of sports movies, as voted on by 70 writers and editors around the world. After compiling the list, the AP assigned writers to present stories examining the Top 10 from unique perspectives. This is the first in the series, a look at the impact of the 10th-best film, "A League of Their Own."

showed up on the movie set that Marshall made sure was full of actors and extras who actually resembled ball players.

No worries with Croteau, who was already carving out her place in hardball history.

Growing up in Virginia, Croteau wanted more than anything to be a left-handed shortstop in the majors. Coaches pointed out that left-handers don't play shortstop in the majors.

So she moved to first base — and kept the same dream.

Croteau made national news in the late 1980s when she sued her high school in Manassas, Va., to allow her to play. The court ultimately ruled she had received a fair tryout.

"I remember when we lost our lawsuit, I came out and they were celebrating like they'd won the World Series," Croteau said.

"That experience really will



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JULIE CROTEAU/AP

Julie Croteau poses near an exhibit in 1996 at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y. Croteau was introduced to the world of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, which was featured in the 1992 hit film "A League of Their Own" starring Geena Davis, Madonna and Tom Hanks.

break a person."

Or in this case, empower them. Croteau earned a spot on the baseball team at St. Mary's College of Maryland as a walk-on.

She made her debut for the Division III school on March 17, 1989, and drew plenty of headlines. Sports Illustrated wrote a blurb about her under the header, "Diamond Pioneer."

"It was a great redemption story," Croteau said.

Next chapter: The movies.

She was a member of the Rockford Peaches in a "A League of Their Own." The Peaches were one of the teams in the AAGPBL, a league created by Chicago Cubs owner Philip K. Wrigley that started play in 1943. It gave more than 500 women a chance at a baseball career over its 12-year

run.

Croteau's main role in the film was to be a stand-in at first base for actor Anne Ramsay during fielding scenes. Both were left handed. The resemblance stopped there, with Croteau donning a black wig to match Ramsay's look.

Croteau did have one speaking part in the film. After the tryout scene inside Wrigley Field, the roster list was posted on a cork board. She ran over, saw her name and exclaimed, "Yeah!" before scampering away.

"I didn't think they were going to keep that in," she joked.

Her Peaches teammates included Davis, Madonna and Rosie O'Donnell. Their manager was Hanks, who played Jimmy Dugan.

In between scenes, Croteau played hacky sack with the other extras. But the real treat was listening to stories from some of the women who played in the AAGPBL and were brought in as advisers.

As for the movie's most famous line uttered by Hanks' character — "There's no crying in baseball!" — Croteau had no idea it would become so legendary. In fact, she remembers thinking, "but there's tons of crying in baseball."

She's not surprised about the timelessness of a movie that's raked in a cumulative worldwide gross of more than \$132 million, according to IMDb.

"It's an underdog story, because it represents women in culture and also women in sports," said Croteau, who years later worked with Davis before the actor threw the first pitch at a Baltimore Orioles game (a perfect strike). "It taps into our humanity."

Croteau's career was just heating up after filming. She went on to play for the Colorado Silver Bullets in 1994, with the women's professional baseball team fac-

About the film

Year: 1992

Screenwriters: Lowell Ganz, Babaloo Mandel

Director: Penny Marshall

Starring: Tom Hanks, Geena Davis, Lori Petty, Madonna, Rosie O'Donnell

Plot: Rival sisters (Davis, Petty) join the first female professional baseball league amid World War II and help it grow.

Iconic Line: "There's no crying in baseball." — Manager Jimmy Dugan (Hanks)

Oscars: no nominations

— Associated Press

ing men's amateur and semi-pro squads. Her manager was Hall of Fame pitcher Phil Niekro.

More history: She and pitcher Lee Anne Ketcham are largely recognized as the first women to play with a winter league team sanctioned by Major League Baseball. They were teammates on the Maui Stingrays in the Hawaiian Winter League. Their roster also included current Milwaukee Brewers manager Craig Counsell.

Along the way, Croteau gave up her glove — to Cooperstown. Her first-base mitt, along with a photo, are enshrined in the Baseball Hall of Fame to commemorate her accomplishments. She also served as an assistant baseball coach at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

So many baseball memories. But this remains high on the list: An invitation to an AAGPBL reunion, where she met even more of the pioneering women who played in the league that inspired "A League of Their Own."

"Being around them," Croteau said, "just made me realize how lucky I am."



GENE SWEENEY JR., THE BALTIMORE SUN/AP

Croteau shouts encouragement to teammates as she makes her debut with the St. Mary's College baseball team on March 17, 1989, in St. Mary's, Md. Croteau made the team as a walk-on.

AUTO RACING/MLB



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Matt Kenseth's retirement didn't last long. He's driving for Chip Ganassi Racing, two years after driving in the 2018 season finale. Kenseth, 48, will be the oldest driver in the field when racing resumes.

Kenseth dusts off his firesuit for chance to win races again

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Matt Kenseth had a blissful year of retirement. He had time to travel with his wife and four daughters, made his first visit to Europe and took up marathon running.

It was free time he never had in 22 years of racing at NASCAR's national level.

"It was really just spending time with Katie and the kids and every day we just woke up trying to find something fun to do as a family," Kenseth said.

"I'd have to say it was the best summer of my life."

"So why in the world would Kenseth give that up?"

He agreed this week to come back to NASCAR and drive for Chip Ganassi Racing, which two weeks ago fired Kyle Larson for using a racial slur during an iRacing event. Kenseth turned 48 in March, will be the oldest driver in a unique situation. When Katie and I talked about it, we figured it is probably the last opportunity like this that I will ever have."

Kenseth wasn't ready to retire at the end of 2017, when he was moved out to Joe Gibbs Racing because it needed his seat for Erik Jones. A two-time Daytona 500 winner and NASCAR's champion in 2003, Kenseth was still a competitive, championship-contending driver.

He looked at what was available and decided to retire.

"When you're as fortunate as I've been throughout my career to always be in winning equipment, there's just no desire to get

Matt Kenseth file

Age: 48
NASCAR Cup record
■ 39 wins with 181 top-5 finishes in 665 starts.

Prominent results
■ Won Daytona 500 in 2009 and 2012.
■ Won 2004 International Race of Champions
■ Won 2003 Winston Cup season championship.

SOURCE: mattkenseth.com

in equipment that you can't win in," Kenseth said. "For me, it is all about, you know, having fun. Winning is fun."

Roush Fenway Racing, where Kenseth spent 16 seasons and won Cup rookie of the year, his championship and both Daytona victories, lured him back to the track in 2018 in a part-time role. The organization was rebuilding and wanted Kenseth's knowledge around. He ran 15 races in slow cars, had just a pair of top-10 finishes and led only five laps.

So he was done. Until he got the call from the Ganassi organization and was offered a seat in a car capable of winning races; Larson was a six-time winner and through four races this year was seventh in the standings.

"Where I am today, I mean, I accomplished way more than I ever thought I would accomplish in my career, but I still feel like I have unfinished business and things I want to do," he said. "The competition and working with a team that's really dedicated and working hard to win races and trying to be part of a piece of that puzzle to try to have success, that

appeals to me."

He will be reunited with former Roush teammate Kurt Busch, who is in his second season with Ganassi and won a championship in 2004 to give Roush back-to-back titles. He talked with Busch prior to accepting the Ganassi offer and is excited to work with "one of the best teammates I ever had."

"He's very unselfish and he doesn't doesn't skimp on anything," Kenseth said. "That was, especially as a two-car team. Are you getting a good teammate to work with? I knew the answer already."

Kenseth's hiring was a very popular move among fans. Ganassi was pleased because he wanted a low-maintenance driver capable of winning races who could placate nervous sponsors after the Larson debacle.

Kenseth is trying to temper expectations. He has never competed in a Chevrolet at the Cup level, has not driven NASCAR's current aerodynamic package and will likely have to jump right into the car and race when the series resumes. NASCAR is expected to return to the track May 17 at Darlington Raceway in South Carolina in a one-day event that might not include qualifying or practice.

He's the previous Southern 500 winner at Darlington as well as a Coca-Cola 600 winner at Charlotte Motor Speedway, the first two tracks expected to be on NASCAR's revised schedule.

"It would be pretty bad if I get out there and really suck," Kenseth said. "So the first few weeks, at least the first week, I'm trying to keep our expectations low because if we're really going to these races and all these places with no practice, that's going to be a slow adjustment to me."

Draft prep poses problems amid a global pandemic

By NOAH TRISTER
Associated Press

The Detroit Tigers can feel certain about one thing: They have the No. 1 pick in the draft.

What that Major League Baseball draft will look like, when and where it will take place and how the selections will be made still isn't clear.

"It's going to present different challenges, probably," said Scott Pleis, Detroit's director of amateur scouting. "It's just going to be different. It's not going to affect the outcome, it'll just be a different way of coming to that outcome."

The NFL experienced that last week because of the coronavirus pandemic, conducting a remote draft with video screens, Zoom chats and other tech innovations that made the event popular with fans.

Normally, the college baseball season would be in full swing right now, giving major league teams a chance to monitor top prospects in the weeks leading up to the draft. But with college and high school games shelved because of the virus outbreak, front offices can only do so much in what is clearly an abnormal year. Every team faces similar obstacles.

"The challenges have been that they stopped playing baseball about six weeks into the spring season," Washington Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo said. "So that's been the biggest hurdle that we had to face. Fortunately, we dive into this draft thing very, very seriously. We got a lot done early on, especially the higher-round type of premier prospects. We have a really good feel of what's out there in the country."

Last month's deal between MLB and the players' union paved the way for changes to the draft, which was set to be held June 10-12 in Omaha, Neb., in conjunction with the College World Series.

Under the agreement, obtained by The Associated Press, MLB has the right to delay the dates of the 2020 and 2021 drafts to as late as July 20, and MLB may reduce rounds from 40 to five in 2020 and to 20 in 2021.

Signing bonuses may be deferred, and signing bonuses for undrafted players subject to the draft will be capped at \$20,000.

If the draft were shortened all the way to five rounds, that would be no small thing. From 2006-2010 — a five-year sample of players who have had plenty of time to contribute — the first five rounds of the draft produced a total of 2,203.5 wins above replacement, according to figures from Base-



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Washington Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo said one challenge for the amateur draft is prospects stopped playing six weeks into the spring season.

ball-Reference.com. Rounds 6-40 produced 961.9 WAR (players who were drafted but didn't sign aren't included in those totals).

Although the bulk of the value is clearly concentrated in the first few rounds, players taken in the sixth round or later can and do go on to productive big league careers — two-time NL Cy Young Award winner Jacob deGrom notably was a ninth-round pick by the Mets in 2010.

This year, the market of undrafted players could be crucial.

"We're going to prepare for, really almost like we prepared for 40 rounds," Pleis said. "We're going to go through them all, we're going to rank them like we've always ranked them."

College programs could reap the benefits of both a shortened draft and the cap on signing bonuses for undrafted players. There may be less incentive for prospects to leave school with eligibility remaining.

The uncertainty about the minor league season this year — and even the college season next year — could also make for some tricky decisions.

"I think there's a host of information that you'd want to know, and then that's really where I think the clubs can differentiate themselves," Texas Rangers GM Jon Daniels said.

"I think that's what we're going to be focused on, demonstrating to players, demonstrating to parents, demonstrating to coaches, and people that care about these players, that we're going to go above and beyond in taking care of our people and developing our players on and off the field," he said.

NHL/BASEBALL

Hall holdovers

Jeter, rest of baseball Hall of Fame class, will be inducted in July 2021

BY JOHN KEKIS
Associated Press

Derek Jeter, Larry Walker and the rest of this year's Baseball Hall of Fame class will have to wait another year for their big moment at Cooperstown.

The Hall of Fame announced Wednesday that it has canceled the July 26 induction ceremony because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Instead, the class will be included at next year's induction festivities — along with any additional new choices — on July 25, 2021.

A record crowd of more than 70,000 had been expected this summer at the small town in upstate New York to honor Jeter, the former New York Yankees captain who came within one vote of election by the Baseball Writers' Association of America in January.

Jeter and Walker were to be inducted with catcher Ted Simmons and the late Marvin Miller, the pioneering players' union head who negotiated free agency and transformed the sport.

"Induction Weekend is a celebration of our national pastime and its greatest legends, and while we are disappointed to cancel this incredibly special event, the Board of Directors' overriding concern is the health and well-being of our new inductees, our Hall of Fame members, our wonderful fans and the hundreds of staff," Hall Chairman Jane Forbes Clark said in a statement.

"In heeding the advice of government officials as well as federal, state and local medical and scientific experts, we chose to act with extraordinary caution in making this decision," she said.

This will be the first year without an induction ceremony since 1960. The Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum closed on March 15 due to the virus outbreak.

Record attendance for an induction ceremony was set in 2007, exceeding 70,000 when Cal Rip-

ken Jr. and the late Tony Gwynn were enshrined. Cooperstown is within easy driving distance of the New York metro area, and loads of Yankees fans had already made their plans to see Jeter on the Hall stage.

Jeter, now the CEO of the Miami Marlins, and Walker were elected by members of the BBWAA. Simmons and Miller were chosen in December by the Hall's Modern Era Committee.

Jeter, a key to five World Series titles, was on 396 of 397 ballots in voting announced Jan. 21. The only player with a higher percentage was former Yankees teammate Mariano Rivera, who became the first unanimous pick in 2019. Walker, making his 10th ballot appearance, got 304 votes — six over the threshold.

Next year's first-time eligible players have no odds-on favorites: Torii Hunter and Mark Buehrle will be on the BBWAA ballot for the first time.

Holdovers include Curt Schilling, who fell 20 votes short this year, and steroids-tainted stars Roger Clemens (56 shy) and Barry Bonds (57). All three will be on the ballot for the ninth time, one shy of the limit.

If anyone new is elected, it would be the first ceremony since 1949 to combine multiple classes.

The first four Hall classes were inducted jointly in 1939 on the day the Hall of Fame opened. The classes of 1946 and '47 were inducted together, as were the classes of 1948 and '49.

Rogers Hornsby was elected in 1942, but there was no induction ceremony because of travel restrictions during World War II.

There was no balloting in 1940, '41 and '43. No ceremony was held in 1950, '58 and '60 after no one was elected.

Since Ty Cobb, Walter Johnson, Christy Mathewson, Babe Ruth and Honus Wagner became the original Hall of Fame class in 1936, the only previous years with no inductions were 1940, '41, '43, '50, '52, '58 and '60.



KEITH SRANOCIC/AP

Matt Manning, 9, of Erie, Pa., sits with other young Pittsburgh Penguins hockey fans on the team's first day of training camp in Cranberry Township, Pa., on Sept. 13. NHL players could return to home rinks as early as May 15, but plans are for games to be played this summer minus fans.

Shorthanded: Leading plan for NHL return means empty rinks

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
AND JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

Get used to the concept of pods and pucks if the NHL is going to have any chance of completing its season, with the most likely scenarios calling for games in empty, air-conditioned arenas during the dog days of summer.

What is emerging as the leading plan involves bringing teams back in a few empty NHL buildings to complete some, if not all, of the remaining regular-season games before opening the playoffs and awarding the Stanley Cup for the 125th time in the past 127 years.

The most aggressive timetable would have players returning to their home rinks as early as May 15, followed by a training camp and possible exhibition games in June, a person familiar with discussions told The Associated Press.

The regular season would then resume in July, with the Cup awarded in September, the person said Tuesday, speaking on the condition of anonymity because plans haven't been finalized.

Commissioner Gary Bettman emphasized no decisions have been made and noted that government and medical officials will ultimately make the call on when sports can return. Still, the league and NHL Players' Association have formed a joint committee to determine a path forward that could get games back on the ice sometime in July without fans in attendance.

The joint committee released a statement Wednesday night echoing Bettman, saying they "have not made any decisions or set a timeline for possible return to play scenarios." However, they added they believed there was a possibility to return to small group activities at team facilities in mid- to late May.

"When we feel that players are

'Guys are preparing to possibly having to play in the summer, and guys just want to play.'

Connor McDavid
Edmonton Oilers captain

safe and we have enough testing and we have enough ways to get back on the ice for us, it's probably going to be contained at playing at like four or five neutral sites," Florida Panthers president Matthew Caldwell said. "My guess is that we would start with either limited fans or empty arenas, so just the teams and their associated staffs."

One scenario calls for teams playing each other at four NHL rinks around North America. Each would play about a dozen regular-season games to even out the standings and determine playoff seedings. Play was postponed with 189 total games remaining for the 31 teams.

Edmonton captain Connor McDavid, who is on the NHL/NHLPA committee that meets weekly, believes "the fairest season is a full season" but that might not be possible. Players must approve any plan to return.

"Guys are preparing to possibly having to play in the summer," McDavid said, "and guys just want to play."

That likely means playing in empty NHL buildings. The minimum league requirements call for arenas having at least four NHL-caliber locker rooms, a nearby practice facility and hotel infrastructure. They also cannot be located in a COVID-19 hot spot, though that definition is not clear.

"Among the scenarios we're looking at is potentially as many as four (cities) because we need a lot of ice," Bettman said on Sportsnet last week.

Bettman alluded to playing as

many as three games a day, which would provide much-needed live entertainment on NBC Sports and other networks, many of whom have time to fill following the postponement of the Summer Olympics.

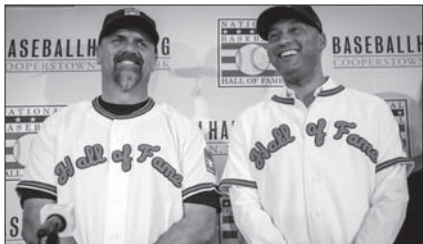
No fans would be in attendance and even broadcasters might be limited to calling games remotely. Mike "Doc" Emrick, the voice of hockey in the U.S. for NBC Sports, has done it a few times for games staged overseas or outdoors.

"It was an interesting concept," Emrick said. "It's not impossible because of high-definition now and because of the precision that you get with the cameras."

The league is still exploring sites, though Bettman's criteria puts places like Edmonton, Alberta, and Columbus, Ohio, on the list because practice rinks and hotels are all nearby. Maple Leafs president Brendan Shanahan said Toronto was in the running, and Bettman spoke to Alberta Premier Jason Kenney last week about Edmonton being one of the sites.

"We would obviously expect the league to prepare a very detailed plan to mitigate risk," Kenney said. "I gather the NHL is looking at finishing the season in arenas for television purposes without large crowds. Whether or not we could accommodate that, we do not yet know."

Some projections suggest the NHL could lose up to \$1 billion in revenue if the season is not completed. The financial hit would affect both owners and players based on the league's revenue-sharing agreement.



BERETO MATTHEWS/AP

Larry Walker, left, and Derek Jeter, who lead this year's Baseball Hall of Fame inductees, will have to wait until July 2021 to have their induction ceremony at Cooperstown, N.Y.

NHL

Goalies make up training methods

Associated Press

TORONTO — Vancouver Canucks goalie Jacob Markstrom is using a tennis ball machine as part of his training to stay sharp.

Columbus Blue Jackets counterpart Joonas Korpisalo doesn't have that technology at his disposal during the coronavirus pandemic, so a wall has had to do the trick.

Toronto's Frederik Andersen is self-isolating with teammate and 47-goal man Auston Matthews.

"I have a pretty good shooter here," Andersen said.

No matter the setup, NHL puck-stoppers are, at least on the surface, at a disadvantage

'We're doing our best and working a lot on hand-eye. Don't let your eyes fall asleep is a big thing.'

Jacob Markstrom
Canucks goalie

situations that even loosely resemble practice or game situations.

"We're doing our best and working a lot on hand-eye," Markstrom said. "Don't let your eyes fall asleep is a big thing."

Winnipeg's Connor Hellebuyck said:

"No one's been through this before. There's really no book, no right way."

Many goalies are leaning on their private trainers.

While a team's strength and conditioning coach has to formulate programs for more than 20 players, people like Adam Francilia, whose NHL clients include the San Jose Sharks, Hellebuyck, Minnesota's Devan Dubnyk and Carolina's James Reimer, develop plans specifically for netminders.

"In some cases they have really great home gyms at their disposal," Francilia said. "And then there's some guys in a condo with nothing... but I have enough stuff in my repertoire that guys only need their body weight to train."

John Stevenson, a performance psychologist and former NHL goalie coach, said he always instructs his netminders to work on blocking outside noise.

"The coronavirus is an uncontrollable," he said. "We don't have control over the uncontrollables, but we definitely have control over how we choose to respond."



NAM Y. HUN/AP

Nashville Predators goalie Pekka Rinne, 37, is one of many veterans nearing the end of their careers who still haven't won the Stanley Cup.

The Waiting Game

Veterans hope for final chance at Stanley Cup

BY TERESA M. WALKER
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Goal-tender Pekka Rinne scratched scoring a goal off his NHL bucket list this season. Winning the Stanley Cup?

That remains on the list with the season suspended because of the coronavirus pandemic amid concerns that next season will be affected, too. Rinne, a three-time All-Star and former Vezina Trophy winner, keeps dreaming about winning his first Cup.

"I always dream about winning Stanley Cup, and I don't mind talking about it publicly," Rinne said Monday. "And, yeah, it is my goal, it is our goal. I'm still hopeful. I'm still positive that we (are) going to get back and back to playing and we have a chance to compete again."

With each passing day, the end of Rinne's career draws closer. The Finn, who turns 38 in November, already has lost his starting job in Nashville to young understudy Juuse Saros.

At least Rinne is under contract for another season. Veterans like Patrick Marleau, Joe Thornton, Jason Spezza, Mikko Koivu, Ryan Miller and Craig Anderson all are in the final year of their contracts and all 37 or older with a chance

DID YOU KNOW?

Veterans Patrick Marleau, Joe Thornton, Jason Spezza, Mikko Koivu, Ryan Miller and Craig Anderson all are in the final year of their contracts, are 37 or older and haven't won the Stanley Cup.

SOURCE: Associated Press

at their first Stanley Cup slipping away.

Marleau had been hoping for his first championship after being traded to Pittsburgh by San Jose at the trade deadline in February. Marleau has enjoyed the short amount of time that he had with the Penguins before the NHL stopped play.

"Everything's been great with the organization," said Marleau, who turns 41 in September. "They've helped out every step of the way and looking forward to getting out of the house. I'm sure like everybody else is and get back to normal and get out there and start playing again."

Thornton, Marleau's former teammate in San Jose, still is hoping to play another season with the Sharks, who are at the bottom of the West right now. Playoff hopes also were already dim for Anaheim and Ottawa with Miller



TONY AVELAR/AP

Patrick Marleau had been hoping for his first Stanley Cup after being traded to Pittsburgh by San Jose at the trade deadline in February.

turning 40 and Anderson turning 39 in the next three months.

Spezza turns 37 in June and had been hoping to lift his first Cup to celebrate.

Minnesota is a point out of the West's second wild card with Wild captain Koivu now 37. He didn't have an answer about his future for reporters earlier this month. He did acknowledge thinking about all his options.

"I'm in a boat like any other player that is trying to wait for the league to make a decision if we're going to restart the season and when that would be," Koivu said. "And if not then obviously trying to figure out what to do with the future and then go from there."

Rinne used the first couple of weeks after the NHL stopped

play March 12 to look at himself. The goalie who led Nashville to the franchise's first Stanley Cup Final in 2017, then won the Vezina on his fourth time as a finalist in 2018 is now a backup.

Rinne is 18-14-4 as a starter this season, and he became only the 12th NHL goalie to score a goal Jan. 9 with an empty netter in Chicago from behind his own goal line. But Saros was in net for Nashville's last six victories, with Rinne 1-3-1 in his final five starts while allowing 17 goals.

"I realized the fact that I haven't had the strongest season so far," Rinne said. "But at the same time, I tried to use this time to my advantage."

AP hockey writer Stephen Whyno and AP sports writer Dave Campbell contributed to this report.

NFL/SOCCER

Winston says he showed maturity

Joining Saints displays will to learn

By BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — The re-education of Jameis Winston is beginning with the New Orleans Saints.

For now, the 2013 Heisman Trophy winner, 2015 top NFL Draft choice and mercurial five-year starting quarterback for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers resembles an eager, enthusiastic and even humble student. “Everyone needs those humble experiences,” said Winston, who in March saw his first NFL employer unceremoniously let him walk in free agency and replace him with six-time Super Bowl winner Tom Brady. “It’s another chapter in my life that I’m going to learn from.”

Winston, who agreed to a one-year, \$1.1 million contract with the Saints this week, hasn’t always been known for making the wisest choices.

There have been risky throws that resulted in an NFL-high 30 interceptions last season, as well as behavior off the field that resulted in a three-game suspension the season before that.

Now, Winston says he’s sacrificed opportunities to earn more

DID YOU KNOW?

New Saints backup quarterback Jameis Winston was the 2013 Heisman Trophy winner and the top pick in the 2015 NFL Draft. After five seasons as the starting quarterback for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, he became a free agent without a new contract offer from the Buccaneers.

SOURCE: Associated Press

money and a starting job in order to gain wisdom about football, leadership and professionalism from record-setting quarterback Drew Brees and offensive-minded coach Sean Payton.

“You’ve got to respect the game. The game will always be bigger than you,” Winston said Wednesday during a conference call, echoing comments he said he learned from mentor Derrick Brooks, a former Florida State and NFL star. “I didn’t think I’d be in this position this time last year, but God had a different plan and I’m excited for the plan that he has for me going forward.”

Winston became one of four quarterbacks on the Saints’ roster, along with Brees, utility player



JAMES KENNEY/AP

Former Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Jameis Winston led the NFL in passing yards last season with 5,109 and ranked second with 33 touchdown passes, but also threw 30 interceptions.

Taysom Hill and seventh-round draft choice Tommy Stevens.

“One thing I’m really excited to learn — the most exciting thing — the way this quarterback room functions,” Winston said. “What’s coach Payton’s approach to every week? What’s Drew’s approach? What’s Taysom doing in the room that I can add to my game? Just trying to find different things by serving this team and learning from everybody.”

Because Hill’s various roles on offense and special teams expose him to a lot of physical contact, Winston will be in more of a traditional backup role to Brees, just as Teddy Bridgewater was the past two seasons before taking a

free-agent offer to replace Cam Newton in Carolina.

When Brees injured his throwing thumb last season, Bridgewater stepped in as starter for five games, going 5-0.

Now Winston will try to repack-age himself as a prospective franchise QB in much the same way.

Winston’s athletic ability has never been in question. Last season he led the NFL with 5,109 yards passing and ranked second with 33 touchdown passes, but also obtained the somewhat dubious distinction of being the first NFL QB with at least 30 TDs and 30 interceptions in the same season. But the Bucs have struggled to win with Winston, going 28-42

in games he started.

Winston’s 2018 suspension resulted from allegations by a female ride-share service driver that the quarterback made unwanted sexual advances several years earlier. The driver never reported the matter to authorities but did notify her employer, Uber.

During college, Winston was accused of raping a fellow student at FSU but was never charged. The university in 2016 settled a lawsuit with Winston’s accuser over the handling of the allegations.

Winston also was implicated in a shoplifting case in Tallahassee involving about \$33 in crab legs and crawfish.

European leagues have different ideas about playing

By ROB HARRIS
Associated Press

England is scrambling to find a solution to the billion-pound question: How to restart the Premier League?

However, the competition with the most to lose financially if the season is abandoned is unlikely to see a clear path forward if it looks across to its European counterparts.

So far, European countries have taken very different approaches to getting sports up and running again amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The French and Dutch leagues have been canceled in the last week after orders from the government.

Players in Italy can train again from next month but the government has started to express unease about Serie A resuming.

Spanish authorities, too, are wary about players gathering on pitches too soon.

Of the major European men’s leagues, only Germany is accelerating a plan to get the Bundesliga back underway — potentially inside two weeks. Switzerland’s government said Wednesday that teams will be allowed to start training again on May 11, with the hope of games starting up in June in empty stadiums.

Even then, medical experts are warning that playing games without fans does not eliminate the risk of COVID-19 being spread by the hundreds of people still required inside stadiums.



MARTIN MEISSNER/AP

US national player Weston McKennie, second from left, exercises with his Bundesliga soccer club FC Schalke 04 during a training session Wednesday in Gelsenkirchen, Germany. Bundesliga officials hope to restart the league without spectators in June.

“There are real worries about infection risks,” Jonas Baer-Hoffman, general secretary of global players’ union FIFPRO, said Wednesday. “There are worries about what that means for their families and friends that they engage with. They are worried very much that they represent something in society that might give a bad influence.”

Leagues have until May 25 to tell UEFA how they plan to complete or curtail the 2019-20 season.

“We are planning on trying to squeeze in the rest of the season,” Lars-Christer Olsson, president of the European Leagues body, said Wednesday. “We have problems with this big uncertainty ... and when it comes to decisions made in the different

countries, by the different authorities.”

“Project Restart” is the Premier League plan being worked through with the government ahead of a conference call with clubs on Friday. The league has already warned politicians that the competition is facing losses of more than \$1.3 billion if the season cannot be completed — mainly due to the need to fulfill the most lucrative television contracts in world soccer.

The Premier League has an optimistic aspiration to resume the season on June 8, with leader Liverpool 25 points clear with nine games remaining.

Arsenal and Tottenham are among the clubs starting to reopen their training facilities this week for individual work on pitches as players try to get back into shape.

“There are big prizes up for grabs and huge economic loss that’s going to be incurred,” said former Manchester United defender Gary Neville, who is now co-owner of fourth-tier professional club Salford City and a Sky Sports broadcaster. “It does cloud minds, in terms of the level of risk people are willing to play on lives in order for the return of football.”

Some clubs wanted the season to be declared null and void but the Premier League and three lower leagues are determined to finish the season.

The Premier League has an optimistic aspiration to resume the season on June 8.

COLLEGE SPORTS/NFL

NCAA wades into compensation plan

Q&A on how paid sponsorships may work

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

The foundation is in place for the NCAA to drastically alter its definition of amateurism.

By this time next year, college athletes may have the official OK to become paid sponsors, able to earn money for their names, images and likenesses without compromising their eligibility.

Remember when Ohio State players got into trouble with the NCAA in 2010 for trading their own memorabilia and gear for tattoos? Or when Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Manziel signed autographs for his money in 2013 and everyone wondered what the punishment might be?

Under the new rules being drawn up across the NCAA, all that would most likely be fine. A report from the NCAA's Federal and State Legislation Working Group laid out how we got here, and what has been agreed upon and what is still to be determined.

There is still a lot to figure out, including how, exactly, to draw up "guardrails sufficient to ensure that... the role of third parties in student-athlete NIL activities is regulated."

Some questions and answers as the NCAA moves to address athlete compensation, a thorny issue for the nation's biggest college sports governing body for more than 60 years.

Who will be permitted to pay the athletes?

The best way to answer that is by laying out who will not be permitted to pay the athletes: The NCAA, the schools and the conferences.

That doesn't mean everybody else is good to go. The NCAA working group said member schools should consider prohibiting athletes from promoting things like alcohol, tobacco and sports gambling. There is also a recommendation to limit what athletes can do with shoe and apparel companies — a source of angst for college sports for a long time.

What about boosters?

Boosters likely won't be immediately disqualified from working with athletes. The NCAA plans to monitor deals athletes make and require them to disclose details, perhaps through a clearinghouse.

Will this be enough to satisfy lawmakers?

No. The NCAA is trying to fend off attempts by states to force the association into opening up the free market for athletes. The

NCAA is also hoping to get help from Congress in the form of a federal law to that will override anything states come up with and provide uniformity.

Reactions to the NCAA's announcement from lawmakers ranged from cautiously optimistic (California state Sen. Nancy Skinner, the primary driver of the state's law on the topic, said it was a step in right direction) to downright dismissive (Florida state Rep. Chip LaMarca said: "If the NCAA's goal was to limit access, then they have accomplished their goal.").

Will Congress deal with the NCAA?

Hard to know.

Senators Chris Murphy and Mitt Romney are leading a group of lawmakers examining compensation for college athletes and related issues. There was momentum for senators to take action. Then a global pandemic hit. This is still a big issue for Murphy and others, but whether it can move forward during a public health and economic crisis remains to be seen.

Is the NCAA angling for an antitrust exemption?

Not directly, but when you ask Congress to protect your organization from state laws and future lawsuits challenging your rules, it sounds a lot like you are asking for antitrust exemption.

Will athletes be capped on what they can earn?

No, according to Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith, who led the group that produced the recommendations approved by the NCAA Board of Governors.

That is notable since the NCAA is still fighting the appeal of an antitrust case in which the plaintiffs claimed the association and its member schools and conferences have illegally capped compensation to athletes at the value of a scholarship.

Can athletes in jerseys tout a local business?

Athletes will not be allowed to use their school logo or brand in their personal deals.

Is the NCAA football video game returning?

Not under these recommendations. That would require a group licensing deal between the players and the schools and the NCAA is steering clear of that.



MATT ROHRKE/AP

Navy quarterback Malcolm Perry runs past Army defensive lineman Edrice Patterson in December in Philadelphia. Perry was drafted by the Miami Dolphins in the seventh round of the NFL Draft.

Help: Perry has been training as reciever

FROM BACK PAGE

going that route.

Half a dozen reporters participated in the conference call with Perry that was organized by the Miami media relations department. The 5-foot-9, 190-pound speedster was initially asked if the Dolphins had mentioned what position he will be asked to play.

"I haven't heard much. I'm just going in with an open mind, positive attitude and ready to play wherever they choose to put me," said Perry, who spoke briefly with Miami general manager Chris Grier and head coach Brian Flores after being chosen just before 7 p.m. on Saturday.

Perry practiced at wide receiver during the East-West Shrine Bowl week and worked out with that position group at the NFL Combine. However, most NFL executives envision the versatile prospect as a multi-positional type of player, capable of lining up in the backfield in certain packages and possibly at quarterback in a Wildcat formation.

"I played wide receiver at the combine. That's the position I've been training for the whole time the position I've been projected to play at the next level," Perry said. "I have a willingness and ability to play other positions as well."

Perry noted he's always "felt pretty natural at running back" and has put considerable effort into learning how to become a slot receiver because "I just wanted to be as good as I could at my weakest position transition."

Perry played slotback and quarterback at Navy, excelling at both while amassing 4,359 career rushing yards. That total ranks second in program history behind Keenan Reynolds (4,559), a quarterback who went on to play slot receiver in the NFL and NFL.

As a senior, Perry set the Football Bowl Subdivision record with 2,017 rushing yards and also scored 21 touchdowns. He was asked during the conference call



JOE GRONELSKI/Stars and Stripes

Perry is seen by some NFL executives as a versatile, multi-positional player, capable of lining up in the backfield in certain packages and possibly at quarterback in a Wildcat formation.

about that playmaking ability as a ballcarrier.

"Getting some yards and, hopefully, scoring touchdowns. That's the goal every time I touch the ball," Perry said. "I have to keep the same attitude of working hard and doing whatever I can to help the team. I'm ready to get the ball rolling."

Perry was asked about his ability to play special teams and responded that he returned kickoffs in games and practiced fielding punts while at Navy. In fact, Perry averaged 24.6 yards on 20 kickoff returns as a sophomore and junior.

"I feel like that's definitely going to be a big role for me, somewhere I'll have to shine in order to get into this league," Perry said. "It's definitely something I've been practicing; I still need to get better at playing special teams."

Perry will be allowed to pursue

an NFL career immediately after graduation thanks to a policy change initiated by President Donald Trump. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper formally issued the new guidelines in November, signing an order that allowed service academy graduates to apply for a waiver delaying their military commitment in order to play pro sports.

Esper's order requires athletes under contract to a professional franchise to gain approval from the defense secretary. Individuals approved for the policy would not be commissioned as officers until their playing careers concluded.

Athletes allowed to pursue pro sports must eventually fulfill their five-year military obligation or repay the government the cost of their college education.

A Dolphins beat reporter asked Perry about the policy change and being able to defer his active duty commitment.

"I know a lot of guys I played with in the past who didn't get this opportunity who definitely had the talent," he said. "It means a lot to be in this position. I'm very fortunate and grateful."

Perry explained that he will eventually be commissioned as a Marine Corps officer. He selected Marine Corps Ground and would be sent to the Basic School in Quantico, Va., if the NFL does not work out.

Perry acknowledged he did not hear from the Dolphins during the months leading up to the NFL Draft. However, he had a supporter within the organization as former Navy fullbacks coach Mike Judge is entering his fourth season as a quality control coach for the Dolphins.

Judge and Miami wide receivers coach Josh Grizzard were part of the staff for the East-West Shrine Bowl, during which Perry ripped off a 52-yard touchdown run after taking a shotgun snap and faking an option pitch to the tailback.

SPORTS



Hall on hold

Baseball's 2020 class will have to wait until next year » **Page 48**

NFL

Whatever it takes

Navy standout Perry has versatility to help Miami

By **BILL WAGNER**
The Capital

ANNAPOLIS, Md.

Former Navy football standout Malcolm Perry conducted a Zoom conference call with members of the media covering the Miami Dolphins on Saturday night. Miami selected Perry in the seventh round of the NFL Draft using a pick previously

acquired from the Kansas City Chiefs. The versatile quarterback was selected

with the 246th overall pick in the draft after a record-setting career at Navy.

It was down to the wire for Perry as there were only nine remaining picks, all of which were compensatory. Had the American Athletic Conference 2019 Offensive Player of the Year not been drafted, he would have been quickly signed as a priority free agent as several teams had already reached out about

‘I’m ready to play wherever they choose to put me.’

Malcolm Perry

Former Navy QB, after being selected by the Miami Dolphins in the NFL Draft

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Navy quarterback Malcolm Perry was selected by the Miami Dolphins with the 246th overall pick in the seventh round of the NFL Draft.

JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes

TO OUR READERS

As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.

